

WHITE POLE MEETING HOUSE

HILLSBORO, WEST VIRGINIA



Property of
Pocahontas County
Historical Society

THE
WHITE POLE MEETING HOUSE
HILLSBORO, WEST VIRGINIA

BY
FRANK A. JOHNSON

(Now Sec'y of the
Methodist Historical Society)

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Pocahontas County
Historical Society

FRANKLIN, WEST VIRGINIA
1963

PREFACE

Many factors enter into the making of a Church history, but the greatest factor in the building of the White Pole Meeting House was the experience pioneer John McNeel had with God. His great deliverance, sincerity and strength caused him to carry out a pledge to God.

It may be that in old Scotland the McNeels were Presbyterians and after suffering severe hardships came to the new world and as some one has said, "Took to the Methodist preaching." Martha Davis, of Wales, had been inspired by the Methodist. The Bible had become her guide and she brought it with her for life guidance into the new lands as a source of strength and comfort in her new home. With John McNeel, she became a forceful cornerstone in the establishment of Methodism in the Meeting House on Mount Tabor close to their wilderness cabin.

The Kinnisons, of English background, all, at first, followed the Methodist way. The Hillsboro group of the Beard Family came largely from Renick's valley where they were Methodist. Here, they married with the Poages, who were staunch Presbyterians. The Hills and the Burnsides, among the first families, like wise were Methodist. The first Callisons came as Quakers. They invited the Methodist ministers to preach in their homes and for years have held the Methodist beliefs. Hardesty in his encyclopedia gives four families as the original proprietors of the village of Hillsboro as follows: John Hill, Davis Poage, Nathaniel Kinnison and James Lewis. Of these only the Poages were Presbyterians.

The early Methodists were not entangled by ecclesiasticism as were the other early Churches of the frontier and for that reason they could follow the settlers into the Western Wilderness. So in West Virginia today nearly fifty per cent of all Church membership is Methodist. In

1758 there were only eight known Methodists in America, but in thirty-eight years they could be found from Maine to Florida and west to the Mississippi river. In twenty years, or by 1788, the membership of the Greenbrier Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Western Virginia was 215 and at Academy fifteen. I am afraid we have not continued with the energy and foresight of our forebearers.

This history has been made by the people of the Little Levels community and by the many devout ministers of the Gospel that have been sent here to guide them.

Permission has been given by various authors of late date for quotations given in this history and I have tried to give credit where due. However, some information has been absorbed by the author from many sources over the years until it is impossible to give the exact source of some descriptions.

The author is deeply indebted to Miss Martha Beard for her help in typing and arranging of materials and to the following:

1. Gilbert Morrison for Church records of Wesley Chapel.
2. Rosa V. Oliver, librarian, Marshall University, Huntington, W.
3. Charles E. Butler, Librarian, West Virginia University,
Morgantown, West Virginia.
4. Rev. Lawrence Sherwood, Oakland, Maryland.
5. Miss R. Dice Smith, Hillsboro, West Virginia
6. Dr. Douglas McNeill, retired History Professor of Davis and
Elkins College living at Buckeye, West Virginia
7. Dr. Henry R. High of Charleston, West Virginia for printing
the illustrations.
8. Rev. Lee Bowman of Franklin, West Virginia for help in mimeo-
graphing.
10. Numerous others for bits of information and advice.

Frank A. Johnson

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THE WHITE POLE MEETING HOUSE

CHAPTER I

LOCATION OF THE "WHITE POLE MEETING HOUSE"

In the mystic ages of the past the mountains were made by God's Word. God smoothed out some valleys in what we know today as the Allegheny mountains. The Great Levels were so made in the region of Frankfort and Lewisburg in Greenbrier County, West Virginia. The same action took place, yet on a smaller scale, which produced what is called the Little Levels in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Through both regions flows the Greenbrier river. It was named by Colonel John Lewis, who had been grievously entangled by the tines of such a brier in this territory.

*1. Through the Little Levels section flow three creeks into the Greenbrier river: Stephen Hole Run flows out of a cave which was for a short time in 1751-1752 the home of Stephen Sewell, for whom it is named, one of the first settlers of what is now Pocahontas County, West Virginia; Stamping Creek, so named for the stamping of the thundering herds at their watering places; Locust Creek named for the great number of locust trees that stood around the head and banks of this stream. Hill's Creek, in the Lobelia section near the homestead of our Pioneer Richard Hill, disappears under the mountain and it is believed that it finally emerges from the base of Droop mountain as Locust Creek. It was to this region that the wandering steps of our Church forefathers were directed by an unerring Providence.

On John Lewis' and his son Andrew's preliminary trip through here in 1751, they met Jacob Marlin, for whom Marlinton is named, and Stephen Sewell, afore mentioned, in what is now the town of Marlinton. *2,3.

- *1. Rose W. Fry, "Recollections of the Rev. John McElhenny, D.D.", (Richmond, 1893) pp. 107-108.
*2. William Price, "History of Pocahontas County, West Virginia", (Marlinton, 1901) pp. 105-107.

2. They had come to make surveys for the Greenbrier Land Company of the one hundred thousand acres that had been granted that corporation. *1. They located lands for Moses Moore on Swago Creek and James Burnside on the Greenbrier river in 1751-1752, and perhaps some for themselves. *2. No more surveys were made near the Little Levels until 1769 or later. *2.

A young man had been picked by our God to fulfill a great plan for His Church here. In the Cumberland Valley, a preacher, Robert Strawbridge, brings for the first time the Methodist preaching to that region. *3. We do not know what attendance was given it by the young man, John McNeill, who had just recently come from his home on the Cacapon river in Frederick County, west of Winchester, Virginia. He was a youth of twenty years, strong and quick tempered. In an altercation that took place near what is now Cumberland, Maryland, where he intended to start for himself a new home, he thought he had killed his antagonist, so he fled in terror for refuge to the Allegheny mountains. *4. Crossing peak after peak, over valleys and through vales, feeding upon roots, game and fish, he finally came to the site of the Little Levels about 1765. *5. With John McNeel began the history of the White Pole Meeting-House, which must have been the first Church ever erected west of the Allegheny mountains. *6,7.

Here he felt a sense of security hemmed in on every side with mountain ranges. It looked to him as though Caanan was stretched out in the heights of the well watered Alleghenies covered at that time with a great forest of oaks, maples, chestnuts and poplars. Building a bark

*1. Virgil A. Lewis, "History and Government of West Virginia", (New York, 1922) p.58.

2. Henry S. Green, "Biennial Report of the Department of Archives and History of West Virginia", (Charleston, 1914) p.21.

3. James E. Armstrong, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907) p.70.

4. H.H. Hardesty, "Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia" "Special History of the Virginias" Maps and Histories of Greenbrier, Pocahontas and Monroe Counties, West Virginia" (New York, 1883) p. 365.

5. William Price, "History of Pocahontas County" (Marlinton, 1901) p. 136.

6. Hardesty, p. 365. *7. Fry, p.71.

COLONEL JOHN McNEEL

Was one of the earliest pioneers in the wilds of West Augusta and the first actual settler on the Little Levels, now in Pocahontas county. He was born near Winchester, Virginia, but early in life went to the Cumberland valley, in Maryland. Here, soon after his settlement, he had an altercation with a young man which resulted in a hand-to-hand fight, and Mr. McNeel, believing that he had killed his antagonist, fled to the wilderness, and after some time spent in wandering amid the wild solitudes of the Alleghanies, he came upon what has ever since been known as the Little Levels. It was a beautiful little valley, hemmed in on all sides by lofty mountain ranges, and here the wanderer and, as he supposed, fugitive from justice, decided to make his future home. Here he reared his lonely cabin. This was about the year 1765, two years after the destruction of the Muddy Creek settlement in Greenbrier, and four years before Col. John Stuart came to the site of old Fort Union.

A short time after Mr. McNeel had occupied his cabin he was out hunting; greatly to his surprise, he met Charles and James Kennison, two white men, who were searching for a suitable site to found a home. From them he learned that the man whom he supposed he had killed, had not died and in fact had not been seriously injured. To him, this was joyful news, for the thought of having caused the death of a fellow-man was the most dreadful to contemplate. The Kennisons accompanied him to his lonely retreat, and with him as a guide soon found lands upon which they resolved to settle, then all three returned east of the mountains to make preparations for their removal into the wilderness.

During their stay in the valley Mr. McNeel wooed and won the heart and hand of a lady named Martha Davis. She was born in Wales in 1743, and at an early date had accompanied her parents to Virginia. Now she prepared to go to the wilderness and share the toils and hardships of a pioneer home. The man to whom she had given the best affections of her heart was worthy of the trust. All things were gotten ready, the journey made and the final home was reached. A few acres of land were cleared, and then, Mr. McNeel remembered his duty to his God, and with his own hands reared a small log cabin in which his neighbors and himself might worship Him who heareth the ravens when they cry, and who watcheth over the wanderer in the wilderness or the mariner upon the ocean. This temple dedicated by its builder to the worship of the Builder of the Universe was called the White Pole Church, and was, in all probability, the first ever erected west of the Alleghany mountains.

At length Dunmore's war broke out, and Mr. McNeel, together with his neighbors, the Kennisons, repaired to Camp Union, enlisted and accompanied General Lewis to Point Pleasant, where they participated in the bloody battle of October 10, 1774. During their absence a child of Mr. McNeel died, and the mother, heroine as she was, constructed a rude coffin, dug a narrow grave, and with her own hands laid the infant away to rest.

lean-to against a low knoll on the south side, opposite what now is the McNeel Cemetery, (Called a "camp" by Minnie Wallace in "History of the Hillsboro Community" p.14) he began to live a precarious existence as a fugitive from justice. We know not of his dreams of the future. Guilt on his conscience made him very humble and cautious.

Again God moved, and two brothers, Charles and Jacob Kinnison, *1,2. also of the Cacapon valley having heard of the good lands from a demented neighbor(*3.) decided upon an exploration of the wilds of the western wilderness. So exploring, they came upon John McNeel as he was hunting game. *4. He was quickly recognized and hailed. For him there was no escape, but the news was good. His antagonist was not dead. The wounds had not even been serious; therefore, John McNeel was a free man and he could return without fear to his old home.

What joy! What relief! How good God had been! I can almost see him embracing his friends in his new found peace. For awhile they shared his lean-to and assisted him in building a cabin. He, in turn, persuaded them of the good land and helped them locate favorable home sites.

Then the three made a journey back to the Cacapon valley for the expressed purpose of preparing to establish permanent homes west of the mountains. There John met a young Welsh girl by the name of Martha Davis. She was of sturdy stock, religious, just and good. *5. Martha had been born in Wales January 28, 1742 at about eight o'clock in the morning. She was the daughter of Thomas and Anne Davis. *6. She had

*1. William Price, p.136.

*2. Mary Isetta Wallace, "History of Hillsboro Community" p.15.

*3. William Price, p. 149.

*4. Wallace, p. 14.

*5. William Price, p. 137.

*6. Old Welsh Bible owned by Miss Mary Thrasher, Bridgewater, Va. (fly leaf) This Bible is very old and has bound within its covers the Four Gospels and the book of Psalms. It does not have any of the writings of the apostle Paul or the other general epistles.

brought with her to this country her Welsh Bible from the region where the Methodist, Charles Wesley and Howell Harris, had preached the Gospel to thousands of her countrymen.

John McNeel likely attended "meeting" with this devout young woman, and she being convinced of his sincerity and trustworthiness accepted his suit and determined to face life with him in West Augusta. After the wedding she accompanied him to this trackless wilderness - facing privation and lack of comforts in the little cabin, to walk during the day in apprehension of the Indians and at night-time to rest with him by the fireside hearing the denisons of the wild send out their blood curdling cries as they sought their prey. She remembered God and His Word and so carried to her new home in the Little Levels her Bible to add to her spiritual well-being. A decendent tells that she also brought a tow tick from her old Virginia home for their physical comfort.

Charles Kinnison was successful in wooing. He won his bride, Miss Martha Day, whose mother had sometime previously been killed by an Indian raiding party. *1. At the same time Martha had been captured but was rescued by her brother, John, accompanied in the rescue by twenty pioneer neighbors who followed the Indians. *2. As a bride Martha, too, came to the Little Levels with Charles the same year.

Jacob Kinnison married and established his home east of the present town of Hillsboro, on the farm later owned by the late Nathaniel Kinnison. (It is now owned by Clarence Beard, Forest Beard, Mrs. Snowden Rose, Gay Pyles and others.) The Kinnisons continued to labor and neighbor with John McNeel until each was contented in his cabin and had sufficient land cleared to raise crops to suppliment the supply of

*1..William Price, p. 150.

2. F. B. Kegley, "History of the Virginia Frontier" (Roanoke, 1938) John Day's account.

game and fish so plentiful in this region.

With the settling of these pioneers began the history of Methodism in the Little Levels. For John McNeel, soon after his home was established, in thanksgiving for his wonderful deliverance, built a cabin (As the historian, Hardesty, says,) "in which his neighbors and he might worship Him who heareth the ravens when they cry, and who watcheth over the wanderer in the wilderness, or the mariner upon the sea." *1.

The site chosen for this house of worship was the sentinel-like summit of a steep knoll above his cabin, (in what is now the McNeel cemetery) and from it could be seen to the north, the south, the east and the west the beautiful Levels and the surrounding mountains. This hill was named "Mount Tabor" indicating 'a place of pilgrimage,' and 'the scene of transfiguration'. "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name." (Psalms 89:12)

We know not the exact date, but upon Mt. Tabor John McNeel built with his own hands a structure which came to be known as the "White Pole Meeting House." This was, in all probability, to house the oldest continuing Methodist congregation west of the Allegheny mountains. Of course, this Church -- as a building -- does not stand today: but in truth, a Church is not just a building --, but its people. That Church still stands. It has never fallen by the wayside. Since before the Revolutionary War, it has been continually on the battle front against sin and wickedness. "The LORD's portion is His people." (Deuteronomy 32:9) *2.

It has been said that our Church's claim to being the oldest in the trans-Allegheny territory is based upon "tradition". "Tradition"

*1. H. H. Hardesty, Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia "Special Histories of the Virginias" "Maps and Histories of Greenbrier, Pocahontas and Monroe Counties, West Virginia" (New York, 1883) p. 365.
 2. King James Version of the Holy Bible.

actually means "information passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth" and can or cannot be based upon fact. Since the knowledge that we have concerning John McNeel's building of the White Pole Meeting House soon after settling in the Little Levels has been passed on from generation to generation of decedents who occupy the homestead of their pioneer ancestor, it would seem that that information might be accepted as factual -- especially, as there has never been any substantial modification of it. Hardesty records it as factual in his history. Written records also state that "soon after his (John) return to the Levels" or "after clearing a FEW acres of ground" (*1,2.) John McNeel built a cabin for the worship of God." Certainly those statements indicate that only a short time lapsed after the establishing of his home before he demonstrated his gratitude to God for delivering him from the terrible thought that he had taken the life of one of his fellowmen. Too, it is most likely that a man of John McNeel's spiritual stamina would in haste, express by work, as well as by words of praise, his thanks for God's safe keeping of his wife, his son and his home in the wilds of western Virginia.*3. Perhaps, the very fact that he named his first son, "Abraham," was an indication of his religious cravings, for as Abraham he had gone out not knowing whither he went; as Abraham he had been led into a good land; and as Abraham he builded an altar.

The most convincing evidence of the early presence of the White Pole Meeting House is based upon an occurrence that took place during the service of John McNeel in Lord Dunmore's War. Hearing the call of his Commonwealth to protect the frontier from Indian depredations, he, along with William Clendenning, Joseph Day, George Clendenning, and

*1. Hardesty, p. 365.

2. James E. Armstrong, History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907) p. 70.

3. Old Welsh Bible (Date of sons birth and other data. This is on the fly leaf.)



The grave cover of the baby boy of John and Martha McNeel. Buried by mother back of White Pole Meeting House in October, 1774, while John was at Point Pleasant



These tombstones of John and Martha McNeel are beside the baby boy's stone above. The baby's stone is between John's and their oldest son, Abraham's artistically carved stone (See left). Martha's is the large right stone with cover.



TOMBSTONE OF
ABRAHAM McNEEL

In the vacant place back of this tombstone is the site of the White Pole Meeting House.

TOMBSTONES OF JOHN & MIRIAM JORDAN

These stones mark the graves and the site of the Mill Run Church. This is in the midst of an acre of land given by John and Miriam for Church.



Charles Kinnison enlisted in John Stewart's Company of Greenbrier Volunteers in the Botetourt Regiment and marched to Point Pleasant where battle raged on October 10, 1774. *1,2. During this absence of her husband, Martha Davis McNeel gave birth to a son which soon sickened and died. She, with her own hands prepared the body for burial, dug a grave on Mount Tabor and there buried her child. *3. Without doubt the White Pole Meeting House was then standing, for burial in Church yards was the custom of the day. And it is hard to believe that any mother would carry her baby for burial to such a lonely knoll, even though beautiful, unless she could find spiritual solace there. Many have seen this little grave just back of where the White Pole Meeting House stood. The late Mrs. Lydia Sydenstricker told me of being shown the grave. (Please see the photograph of this grave beside that of John McNeel's grave in page of illustrations.)

The fact that it is called a "Meeting House" would indicate that it was built before the Act of Toleration in 1785. *4,5. It is an old or inadequate building when the deed was made to the Methodist Episcopal Church by John and Martha McNeel in 1799. For the deed insists upon the building of a new Church. *6. If it had not been built until 1790 neither might have been true. There are several interpretations that could be given Bishop Whatcoat's account in his Journal of the "exhortations to N. C." in Little Levels in 1790. *7. One is that the letters

- *1. Virgil A. Lewis, "History and Government of West Virginia" (New York, 1922).
- 2. Lewis, "History of the Battle of Point Pleasant" (Charleston, 1909)
- 3. Hardesty, p. 365
- 4. Charles H. Ambler, "West Virginia, The Mountain State" (New York, 1933)
- 5. Lewis, "History and Government of West Virginia" (New York, 1922)
- 6. Deed for land containing Mt. Tabor Church given to the Methodist Episcopal Church by John and Martha McNeel in 1799. The original deed is in the Methodist Historical at West Virginia Wesleyan College.
- 7. Richard Whatcoat, "Journal of" August 1, 1769-1790

"N" and "C" in Whatcoat short hand may mean a new "class" or as the Reverend Lawrence Sherwood suggests a, "Negro Class" as there were servants who were Methodist. Whatcoat would not likely be exhorting to a New Chapel, but to a group of people. The deed of 1799 is the first deed to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Yet we know of a Methodist organization at least as early as 1787.

It is believed by some that William Phoebus established preaching the White Pole Church at about the time traveled this mountain region with Edward Keenan who gave the lot and helped build "Old Rehoboth". It was while traveling over Peter's mountain in company with Phoebus that Edward Keenan was converted. *1,2.

Bennett says in his history that local preacher mainly established Methodism in Botetourt and Greenbrier Counties. *3,4. When John Smith, the first minister assigned by the Baltimore Conference to this section was in 1787 speaking of "new ground" (*5) He likely referred to new locations, for already Jacob Cook (*6) had been preaching for several years. It is quite likely that Valentine Cook, Jr. (*7) began his ministry during the stay of John Smith on this Circuit. If Jacob Cook preached at the White Pole Meeting House, his ministry came sometime between 1782 and 1787 as did that of Phoebus. The other local preachers (*8) of Old Rehoboth could have preached here and were of course used in the organization of this charge in 1787. *9.

*1. James E. Armstrong, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907).

2. Rev. Lawrence Sherwood's Letters to Frank A. Johnson.

3. Armstrong, p. 272.

4. Armstrong, Quote from Bennett p. 336.

5. John Smith, "Journal of 1786-1788" p18.

6. Armstrong, p. 71.

7. "Minutes of the General Conference and the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-1848)

8. Armstrong, p. 7.

9. Sherwood, "Letters"

The soldiers returned but not to remain. The struggle between the Mother Country and her American Colonies was rapidly verging to a crisis, and they at once crossed the mountains and joined the patriot army, in which they served until they saw the thirteen feeble colonies of 1776 the recognized nation of 1783.

If the traveler who visits the beautiful little mountain town of Hillsboro, will stroll a mile and a half to the north of that village he will reach a beautiful cemetery in which repose many of the pioneers of Pocahontas county. There sleep John McNeel and his wife, Charles and Edward Kennison and their wives, and several other heroes of Point Pleasant and patriots of the Revolution. No historian has inscribed their names high upon the pillar of fame, but their memory lives where they would have wished it to live—in the hearts of those who dwell among the mountains, where they themselves first planted the banner of civilization.



The gravestone of John McNeel, age 80 years.

It is said that Bishop Asbury, the great apostle of Methodism, was the first minister who visited the Little Levels, and that as early as 1789 he preached in the little "White Pole Church," erected by John McNeel, as elsewhere mentioned. The tradition is doubtless true, for it is substantiated by general records of the church. It appears that the first organization was perfected here in the last named year, and at the time the members composing the church were John McNeel, Martha McNeel, James Lewis and wife, Alexander Wadell and wife, Charles Kennison, Jacob Kennison, Mrs. James Brinnell, John Switzer and wife, Richard Hill, Nancy Hill, and Abraham McNeel and wife.

Hillsboro, the only village in the district, is situated on the Little Levels, 34 miles northeast of Lewisburg, and 17 miles southwest of Huntersville, the county seat. It was laid out in 1843, by Joseph Brown, a Presbyterian minister and school teacher. The original proprietors were John Hill, Davis Poage, Nathaniel Kennison and James Lewis.

Photostats of part of page 369 of Hardesty's, containing the record of membership of church.

CHAPTER II

THE CIRCUIT RIDER, JOHN SMITH AND BISHOP ASBURY

Now begins our story of the Methodist Circuit riders who came here. Paul Neff Garber, in his book, "The Methodist Meeting House" says, "The circuit riders were pioneers. They did not wait until cities were founded to proclaim their message; they went searching for souls on every frontier." Again he says, "When Bishop Asbury saw people almost foodless, shelterless clothless, toiling along on foot or horseback across the Allegheny mountains, he wrote in his Journal, "We must send preachers after these people." Keeping up with the frontier became an obsession." Stephen A. Douglas once declared that the Methodist preacher with his saddle bags carried civilization throughout the west.

Until 1787 this region was missionary territory or was under the directorate of the Bedford Circuit, but in that year the General Conference divided it into the Bedford and the Greenbrier Circuits. The General Minutes gives Greenbrier's total membership as one hundred. *1. The oldest documentary record that we have names John Smith as the first rider appointed to the Greenbrier Circuit. He was assigned by the General Conference which convened July 3, 1787.

It was on September 19, 1787, that he arrived in the Little Levels for the first time, having come here from Anthony's Creek. He stayed all night at the home of James Callison (a Quaker) where he preached the next evening. He then rode thirty miles to Boggs' at the mouth of Spring Creek where he preached and stayed that night. *2. It was on October 17, 1787, that he first came to John McNeels where he preached and remained two days. *3. At no time does he tell us about the McNeels

*1. Minutes, "General Conference and Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-18480) 1787.

2. "Journal of John Smith 1786-1788." p. 21.

3. Smith, p. 31.

themselves or of the church in which services were held. This was unusual, for early official records very often, instead of listing the name of the church, gave the name of the frontiersman in whose home services were first held. However, he did continue to come regularly to their place for services when the weather permitted him to do so.

His various visits at McNeel's and vicinity are mentioned as follows in his Journal:

"Wed. 17 (October, 1787) Rode about 30 miles over hills and mountains from Anthonys Creek to the Little Levels - - -

"Thurs. 18 Preached at John McNeals there was many attended several were affected and I hope my labor was not in vain. - - -

(It seems that he came directly to McNeel's this time for he preached at James Callison's on Friday 19th) *1.

"The 16&17 (Nov.) Preached in the Little Levels. *2.

"Wed April 2 (1788) Rode about 30 Miles over Mountains about dusk got to the Greenbrier River but cou'd not cross Lodg'd at C. Hamilton.

"Thurs (April) Swam our horses crost the river and rode up to the Little Levels to A rich poor man's. He had great possessions of land and stock yet appears to have nothing. When we got there they had a sick cow in the house with them which made it appear as if I had got in to a cow pen. My Master had to lay down amongst beast and should I think hard. Lord help me to bear all things to thy Glory - - -

"Sat. (April) 5 Preached at Clendenin's Fort Many attended and I believe the spirit was in the Word and reached many hearts from thence rode 30 miles Down again Lodg's at Watt(s - - (Probably at the mouth of Spring Creek) *4.

"In July met with Mr. Asbury and traveled with him through my

*John Smith, Journal of, (1786-1788) p. 31
 2 Smith, p. 33.
 3. Smith, p. 52.
 4. " p. 53.

circuit." *1. (It is of interest to know that Bishop Asbury is said to have, during his Episcopate, traveled 227,000 miles, preached 1600 sermons, ordained 4000 ministers and sat as president of 224 Annual Conferences.)

John Smith was a man of weak constitution (*2) but usually traveled thirty or forty miles a day on horseback, sometimes preaching two or three times.

At a Conference held at Rehoboth on the 5th and 6th of July, 1778, at a Quarterly Meeting, Bishop Asbury ordained our pastor, John Smith, a Deacon. Thus he became the first Methodist preacher to be ordained west of the Allegheny mountains. *3. He says of this, "The 5 & 6 days of July we held Q. Meeting in the Sinks of the Greenbrier where I was Ordained Deacon O! that God may make me faithful to my trust. From thence on the 6th I set out for Philadelphia." *4.

On the visit to McNeel's on July 1788 he was accompanied by Bishop Asbury, William Phoebus and Valentine Cook, Jr... *5. William Phoebus became a great Doctor of Medicine in New York and Valentine Cook, Jr., just in the beginning of his career, was to become one of the greatest preachers of his day. Rev. John Smith in his Journal never mentions receiving any members at McNeel's. Yet it seems as though he may have had a very fruitful ministry. At the close of the year there were fifteen members of the White Pole Church and a total membership on the Greenbrier Circuit of 215. *6,7.

On Tuesday July 6, 1788, Bishop Francis Asbury in his Journal says, "Preached McNeel's on the Little Levels where the whole settlement came

- *1. John Smith's Journal p. 55.
- *2. Abel Stevens, History of American Methodism" (New York,) p. 147.
- *3. Lawrence Sherwood, "John Smith, Pioneer Circuit Rider".
- *4. Smith. p. 55.
- *5. "Bishop Francis Asbury Journal" (July 1788)
- *6. Hardesty, p. 369.
- *7. Minutes "General Conference and Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-1848)

together, with whom I found freedom on Matt. 11:26-30. Our Brother Phoebeus had to answer questions propounded to him till evening. *1. The Table Grace sung by Asbury was:

"Be present at our table, Lord,
Be here and everywhere adored,
Be here to bless and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee." *2.

The organization of this Church was likely perfected at this time or earlier because of the question period conducted by the Rev. William Phoebeus. The membership of the "White Pole Church" on this the first visit of Asbury according to the church records were: John McNeel, Martha McNeel, James Lewis, and wife, Alexander Wadell and wife, Charles and Jacob Kinnison, Mrs. James Brinnell, John Switzer and wife, Richard Hill, Nancy Hill, and Abraham McNeel and wife. *3.

Martha McNeel(*4,5,6,) was the wife of John McNeel -both pioneers. James Lewis was among the pioneers, and his land joined that of John McNeel. *7,8,9. Alexander Wadell was a settler of an early date in vicinity of Marvin Chapel. He thought that the Little Levels was "too level and glady". His wife was a Miss Rouss. *10. Charles Kinnison's wife, Martha Day, may have been dead at this time. *11. We do not know any thing concerning Jacob Kinnison's wife. Richard Hill is the Loneville pioneer, and his wife, "Nancy" was the second living daughter of John McNeel and Martha. *12,13,14,15,16.

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|--|----------------------------------|
| *1. Bishop Asbury Journal (1788) | *13. Genologies of McNeel Family |
| 2. Armstrong, p.133. | 14. William Price, p. 116-122. |
| 3. Hardesty, p.369. | 15. Alexander S. Withers, "Chron |
| 4. Armstrong, p.70. | of Border Warfare" (Cinn., |
| 5. William Price p.137, 142-143. | 1912) p. 291. |
| 6. Old Welsh Bible (Fly leaf) | 16. Old Welsh Bible, (Fly leaf) |
| 7. Christie Lewis' Will. | |
| 8. " " | |
| 9. Deed made by John and Martha McNeel for Mount Tabor Church Lot | |
| 10. William Price, p.479. | |
| 11. Genologies of the John McNeel Family in the possession of Mrs. | |
| Edwin Bruffey, Beard, West Virginia. | |
| 12. Genologies of the Richard Hill Family in the possession of the | |
| family of the late Guy Kinnison. | |

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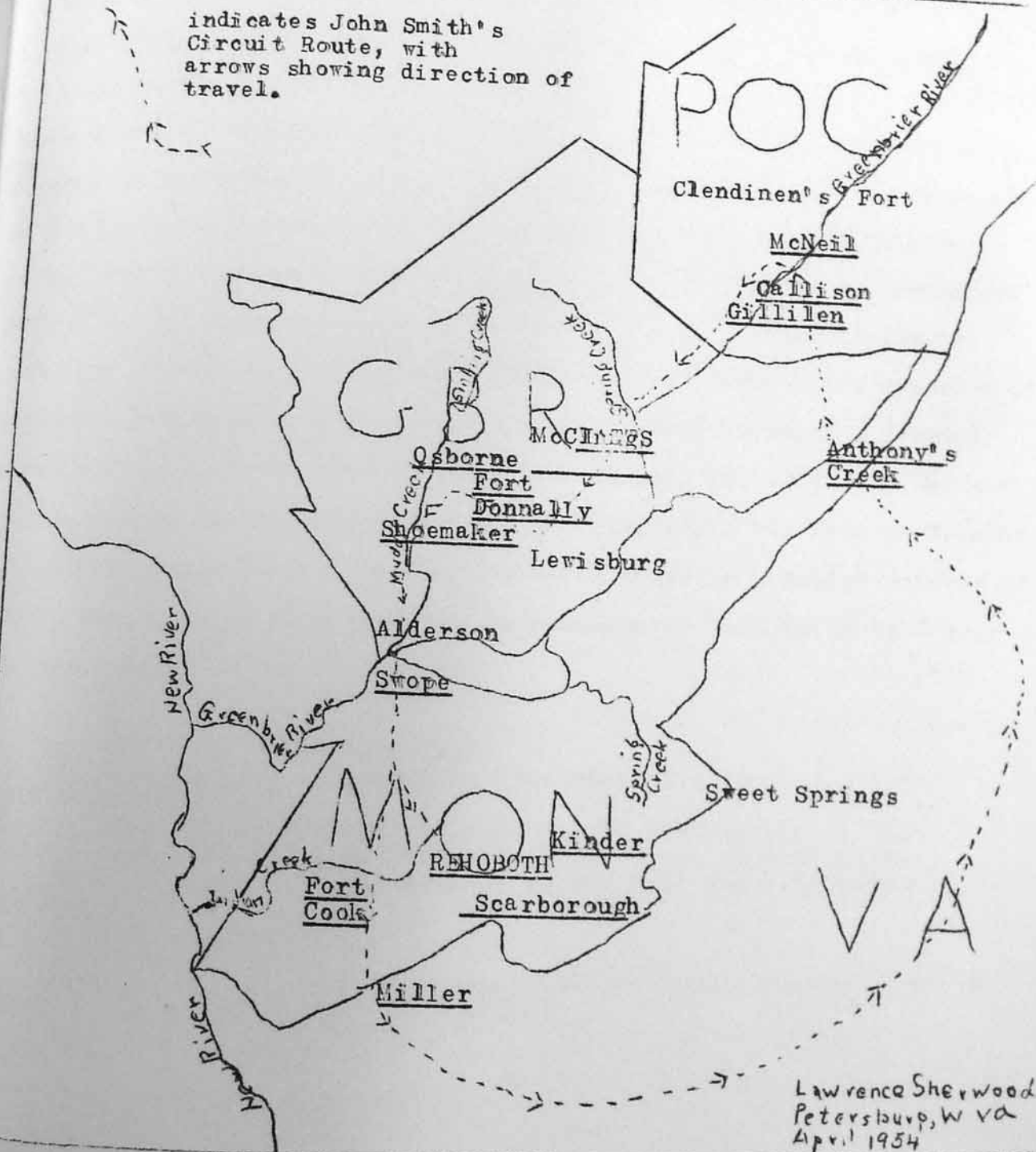
GREENBRIER CIRCUIT....ITS FIRST YEAR: 1787-88

12

A reconstruction of the Circuit Plan on the Greenbrier Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church as it probably appeared at the end of its first year. Only regular preaching places in present West Virginia included. Made from the manuscript "Journal of John Smith."

	1st Week	Until	3rd Week	4th Week	
SUN	Rehoboth	Tues	he	Watts	SUN
MON	Kinder	of	returned	McClung	MON
TUES	Scarborough	the	Anthony's C.	Donnally	TUES
WED	Fort Cook	third	McNeil	Osborne	WED
THURS	Miller	week	Callison	Shoemaker	THURS
FRI	(Into	when	Gillilien	Swope	FRI
SAT	Virginia				SAT

indicates John Smith's Circuit Route, with arrows showing direction of travel.



Abraham McNeel was the oldest son of John and Martha McNeel and their first child. *1,2. His wife was Margaret Lamb. *1,2.

For one month, (December, 1787) Rev. Jeremiah Maston of the Holston Circuit traded with John Smith and served as pastor of this Charge. *3.

The Reverend John Kerr Fleming in his "History of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church", Hillsboro, West Virginia, says, "There is ample reason to believe that the Methodist Work is the oldest religious work in the Little Levels section." *4. The Reverend John McCue started work in this region for the Presbyterians and had previously organized the Old Stone Church in Lewisburg, West Virginia. *5. The first documentary reference to the Little Levels Presbyterian Church is in Vol. 1. "Minutes of the Lexington Presbytery", October 21, 1788, and contains the order in the action of Presbytery: "Mr. John McCue is appointed to preach one Sabbath in the Sinks of Greenbrier, another in the Little Levels and catechise both." *6. As has been said the first documentary evidence of Methodist services in Little Levels is found in John Smith's Journal when he first came to James Callison's September 19, 1787. *7. He had been appointed to the charge the 3rd of July, 1787. *8. Then on October 17, 1787 he first arrived at John McNeel's where he preached October 19, 1787. This service antedates the Appointment of John McCue by a year and three days.

- *1. Old Welsh Bible (Fly leaf)
- 2. William Price, History of Pocahontas County West Virginia" (Marlinton, 1901) p.22.
- 3. John Smith, "Journal of John Smith" (1786-1788) p. 35.
- 4. John Kerr Fleming, "History of Oak Grove Church" p.16.
- 5. Rose W. Fry, "Recollections of the Rev. John McElhenny, D.D." Richmond, 1893) p. 94.
- 6. Fleming, p.19.
- 7. Smith, p. 2.
- 8. Minutes, "General Conference and Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-1848).

CHAPTER III.

OTHER CIRCUIT RIDERS

John Smith was followed by Richard Swift and Benjamin Carter as Circuit Riders in 1788.

In 1789 James Riggins and Jesse Richardson came here. Jeremiah Able was presiding Elder. (The term "Presiding Elder" first occurs in the "Old Minutes" of that year.)

These men were followed by Lasley Matthews, who had been converted from Roman Catholicism and "was a wonderful man of God". During his ministry here on Saturday, July 17, and Sunday, July 18, 1790 Bishop Asbury said that he reached McNeels in the Little Levels and stated, "We had a warm sermon at McNeel's at which many were highly offended, but I hope their false peace is broken. There are many bears in this part of the Country; not long since a child from this neighborhood was killed by one." (For local details of this bear story see Supplement.)

In 1791 Salathiel Weeks and George Martin were assigned to travel the Greenbrier Circuit.

On May 22, 1792 at Rehoboth, in the Greenbrier District, James War was admitted on trial. John Kobler, remaining on Trial, Was received in Full Connection and ordained Deacon. He, by the request of Bishop Asbury, related to the Conference his religious experience. On Tuesday he was examined first, as to debt; second, his faith in Christ; and third, his pursuit after holiness. John Kobler was then assigned to this Circuit with no Elder. *1,2,3. This year Bishop Asbury visited the Little Levels on Friday May 26th. He recorded "We rode twenty-six mile to Little Levels. O! What a solitary country is this". *4.

- *1. Stith Mead, "The Journal of Stith Mead" (1792-1793)
- *2. "General Minutes of General Conference and Baltimore Conference Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-1848)
- *3. Armstrong, p.p. 108-109.
- *4. Francis Asbury Journal (1792)

Francis Acuff came as circuit rider in 1793, and was followed by Anthony Sale in 1794 and James Green in 1795. William Spencer arrived in 1796. *1. In that year Bishop Asbury again visited McNeel's with D. Hitt. He said, "Sunday, May 29, 1796 I was very warm in body and mind at McNeel's in Little Levels. *2.

In 1797 the membership of the Circuit was 250, and Richard Bird was sent to travel on this work. *1. The salary of the preacher was sixty-four dollars for that year.

James Ward, "a holy man of God", came as circuit rider in both 1798 and 1799. Richard Whatcoat was Presiding Elder. It was finally during their ministry that a deed was made the "Nineteenth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety nine, wherein, John McNeel and Martha, his wife, of the County of Bath and State of Virginia, on the one part,-- sold to Tho. Scott, John Pennell, Richard Hill, Griffith Evans, Jacob Kinnison, Alex. Waddell, William Waddell, James Lewis, and Jonathan McNeel, Trustees in truth" and "their 'Suckcessors in office forever," "a certain lot containing and laid out One Acre of land together with the Meeting House known by the name of Mt. Tabor for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." (When the "One Acre" was laid out it was surveyed so accurately that inches and even half-inches were measured and recorded.) *3.

As to these trustees, we know that Richard Hill and Griffith Evans were sons-in-law of John McNeel. and that Jonathan McNeel was the son of the pioneer Thomas McNeill of Buckeye, a half brother of John McNeel. *4. William Waddell was the son of the pioneer Alexander Waddell, who

*1. "Minutes of General Conference Methodist Episcopal Church" (1796)

2. Francis Asbury's Journal (1796)

3. Deed of Mount Tabor Church.

4. James E. Armstrong, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907) p. 70.

was both a member and a Trustee. *1,2,3. A precedent was broken when James Ward was assigned for a second year's service on the Greenbrier Circuit. In May of 1800 Elder Richard Whatcoat of this District was elected Bishop by the Baltimore Conference. *4.

In the last of this year (1800) the Circuit's name became the Greenbrier and Bottetourt Circuit." Christopher S. Mooring, Daniel R. and Samuel S. Steward were appointed to travel it. *4. Their salaries were raised to eighty dollars each a year with fourteen dollars allowance for traveling expense for each preacher's child up to seven years of age, and twenty-four dollars for those up to fourteen years of age. *5.

The Circuit in 1801 was placed in the Richmond District of the Baltimore Conference, and Joseph Pennel was assigned rider. In 1802 Josiah Phillips became the Circuit itinerant. *4. By 1803 the Greenbrier District entered as a District the Baltimore Conference and James Smith was assigned to ride with James Ward as Presiding Elder., *4. This became one of the greatest years in the Little Levels. Bennett recorded: "At a Quarterly Meeting held at Little Levels in Greenbrier, one hundred were converted in six days." *5. At different Camp Meetings in Bottetourt and Greenbrier, five hundred were converted. *6. Asbury's sermon and prayer in the year 1790 must have born fruit. Revivals seem to sweep the countryside and it is said that even the Oak Grove Presbyterian Church at Hillsboro, West Virginia was visited with those bodily exercises called "the jerks". *7.

- *1. William Price, pp. 479-480.
- 2. Hardesty, p. 369
- 3. Deed to Mount Tabor Church.
- 4. Minutes: "General Conference and Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-1848)
- 5. James E. Armstrong, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907) p. 137.
- 6. Armstrong, p. 137.
- 7. Rose M. Fry, "Recollections of the Rev. John McElhenny, D.D." (Richmond, 1893) p. 103.

In 1804 Frederick Stier and Edmond Henley were assigned to this Circuit. Edmond Henley was a devout but very sickly man. Four years after his ministry here, expecting death, he hurried to his father's home, erected a stand at the family graveyard and preached from it his own funeral to his old neighbors and friends. Soon after he was buried there. *1,2. Stier and Henley were followed in 1805 by Lasley Matthews, who served here in 1790. This time he had as his assistant, Adam Burke. This Circuit was traveled by Thomas Budd and Robert Bolton in 1806. Saul Hinkle came in 1807 and Eli Towne in 1808.

By 1809 James Watts came with the indefatigable itinerant, Joseph Carson, to the Greenbrier Circuit which embraced the whole of the County of Greenbrier, and parts of Giles and Bath. There were twenty-two appointments, each four weeks -- some of them fifty miles apart. Carson said, "I had been told that it was a rude country and a very hard Circuit." This he found to be true, it being "not very pleasant to use bear meat for both bread and meat." But his recompense was the addition of one hundred fifty souls to the Church. *3.

The year, 1810 brought to the Little Levels Beverly Waugh, who had joined the Baltimore Conference the previous year. He was sent to Washington in 1811. Later his abilities secured for him many important positions in his Conference, and in 1836 the General Conference elected him Bishop. The Circuit was served in 1811 by Nathaniel B. Mills, 1812 by Benedict Reynolds, 1813 by James Charles, 1814 by Jacob Snyder, 1815 by John Bull and in 1816-1817 by James Watts. (A complete list as far as seems possible of the ministers of the White Pole Church and its successors will be found in the supplement.)

By 1816 several changes had been instituted by the Conference.

- *1. "Minutes of the General Conference" (1783-1848)
- 2. Able Stevens, "History of American Methodism" (New York,)
- 3. Armstrong, p.15.

Chief them were: the introduction of a course of study for preachers, the forbidding of rented pews in Churches and the allowance of one hundred dollars yearly salary for the preachers. *1. James Watts came back as pastor. *2. He was a native of Greenbrier County and was only five years old when John Smith visited and preached in his home. Amos Smith came to this Charge with Samuel Montgomery in 1820.

In 1821 the Greenbrier Circuit was transferred from the Baltimore to the Kentucky Conference. Again a precedent was broken for both Smith and Montgomery were to serve a second year. For four years this Circuit belonged to the Kentucky Conference and then returned to the Baltimore Conference in 1825.*3 Samuel Ellis and William McDowell were appointed to ride. The next year the "Greenbrier District was discontinued, and this Circuit came to the Rockingham District and was called the "Warm Springs Charge. In 1827 this Charge was divided into the Greenbrier and Warm Springs Charges with Little Levels in the latter. John Howell was the first minister ever to serve this Charge three continuous years. *2.

*1. James E. Armstrong, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907) p. 181.

2. Minutes of the "General Conference and Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (1783-1848)

3. Minutes of the Kentucky Conference.

CHAPTER IV.

MILL RUN CHURCH

About this time the White Pole Church or Mount Tabor was almost un-
useable and plans were made for the erection of a new building on Mill
Run. Mill Run was just a short distance up over the hill from Fort
Burnside and on what had been the Burnside Farm. As to why the Method-
ist Episcopal Church was removed three miles from Mount Tabor to the
other side of the Little Levels I have asked the pioneer decedents.
The following are their answers: first, the whole people of the Little
Levels could be better served at this location since this was on the
"old turnpike" or the "great road" as it is called in the deed made in
January, 1830 between John and Mariam Jordan, and the Trustees of the
Methodist Episcopal Church of America; second, John Jordan was a
religious, considerate and influential man. He had been having both
Presbyterian and Methodist preaching services in his home for many years.
His wife, Mariam, was the daughter of the pioneer, John McNeel, and a
staunch Methodist. With the deterioration of the Mount Tabor Church, it
is likely that he decided to honor his wife by building a house of
worship near their own home. I believe that the center of population had
shifted because of the building of a large Methodist Protestant Church
later near the homestead of the pioneer Charles Callison.

The trustees of this Church were William Edmondson, Andrew Edmond-
son, John Grimes, Richard Hill, Mark Kinnison, Abraham Hill and Nathan-
iel Kennison. It was deeded to them and "their successors, in office,
forever in trust, for the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States
of America." This deed conveyed "one acre of land with the house that
is built thereon for the purpose of Divine worship." *1.

*1. Deed Book at Pocahontas County Court House, (Marlinton) Deed of
the Mill Run Methodist Episcopal Church.

At Mill Run can still be seen a small gate enclosed graveyard which is the site of this Church. In it are the graves of John and Mariam Jordan. (See photograph on page of illustrations.)

By 1832 the Warm Springs Charge was changed to the Huntersville Charge with the Reverend James Green and the Reverend James Watts as its ministers. In 1835 the Reverend Stephen Smith and the Reverend J. Planter were assigned to ride the Circuit. Mr. Smith is the grandfather of Miss Roberta Dice Smith of the present Wesley Chapel. From her father, Mr. Asbury R. Smith, Miss Smith learned that this Circuit extended up the Greenbrier valley to the top of the Alleghenies, then over into Bath County, Virginia through Warm Springs and Hot Springs, and down Anthony's Creek to the McMillion Class, in what is now Renick, West Virginia, a three weeks' journey.

The Mill Run Church was used until it was destroyed by fire about 1841. Since then this building has been known locally as the "Burnt Church". As to its destruction there are many legends. The one thing they all have in common is that the fire was of incendiary origin. One story is that a man about ready to build a house had need of many hand-cut nails that it contained. To burn the Church for nails seems almost incredible to us, but we are prone to forget that those were days of scarcity in even the barest necessities of life. Another story results from the feeling concerning slavery. It is said that some Methodist were opposed to slavery and that a pro-slavery resident of the community paid a coon skin cap to a slave to have it burned. The story connected with the actual burning is that the culprit fell over a cliff of rocks while trying to escape from the scene of the crime, and of his injuries being such that the few remaining years of his life he was a helpless cripple.

What story is true no one knows for a search of the County Court's

records until 1848 does not show that anyone was convicted, or tried for the wrong-doing. The reason seems to be that the Methodist felt that God had meted out full justice to the one who had committed such a terrible crime. (Circuit Court Records of the County of Pocahontas 1830-1848)

After the loss of this Church Methodist services were held in various homes, except for preaching and Quarterly Conference sessions. Through the invitation of the Elders of the Oak Grove Presbyterian (Old Brick) Church services were conducted in their sanctuary until the erection of the Little Levels' new Methodist Church, Wesley Chapel.

CHAPTER V.

SCHOOLS AND THE PARSONAGE HOUSE

In 1842 there was established in the Little Levels' village of Hillsboro, a school which was to serve as a preparatory school to the University of Virginia. It was called the "Academy" and became the first school of higher learning in Pocahontas County. This same year the village's name was changed to "Academy" and was called by that name until 1914 when it was again given the name of Hillsboro.

At the First Quarterly Conference in July 1846, with the Presiding Elder, the Reverend B. N. Brown, in charge, held in the New Salem (Now Arbovale) there was allotted the pastor of our Charge, the Reverend Fish, one hundred dollars salary for fuel and table expenses. The following classes were organized for this Charge: W.D. Arbogast, Mt. Zion, Ward Sharp, Hamlin Church, McNeills (probably Swago), Richard Hill (Lobelia), Snedegars, J.E. Moore (Mill Point), New Salem, Herrings, Nathaniel Kennison (Hillsboro) and J. Ruckman (Marvin Chapel). Back Allegheny was added before the year's end. Because of the illness of Brother Fish the year was finished by Rev. J. N. Davis, a local preacher. Mr. John Waugh was also a local preacher of the Charge. For the last quarter of the year Rev. J. N. Davis received for his labor \$1.50. traveling expense and \$40.00. quarterage. The McNeill's class paid that quarter \$1.01 $\frac{1}{2}$, N. Kinnison's \$3.00. and Richard Hill's \$2.50. *1.

Sometime previous to 1846 the Huntersville Charge had decided to build a parsonage on a lot at New Salem (Arbovale) for the use of its ministers. On June 19, 1847 with John McNeill as secretary and James Clark, as Preacher in charge, "it was unanimously resolved that the erection of a parsonage house on the lot at New Salem be, and is hereby

*1. "Steward's Book Huntersville Circuit- Baltimore Conference of the United States of America" Book #2 (July 18, 1846-Nov. 13, 1852) pp. 1-7

disannulled and made void; and that the subscription for building the same be also made void and of none effect and that it be destroyed entirely."

"On motion, it was ordered that a parsonage house should be built near the Little Levels Academy. The Quarterly Meeting Conference proceeded to appoint James Wanless, John Hill, Abraham Hill, John McNeill, Nathaniel Kennison, George Burner, William Young, John H. Buckman & John Wooddell, the trustees for said Parsonage House Also appointed: John Hill, William Kinnison, Abraham Hill, Thomas Morrison and John H. Buckman, the building committee"... *1.

The land for this building was deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church June 24, 1847 by Mr. Nathaniel Kinnison from a direct land grant made to him by the Virginia Commonwealth January 28, 1790. *2.

From this Circuit there had been formed the "Woodsborough" Circuit, and James Wooddell had been appointed by the Quarterly Conference as an agent for settling with the Woodsborough officials, and dividing and receiving the property of its parsonage furniture. *3.

The Huntersville Circuit parsonage trustees made the following report on September 26, 1848: "First, we have one acre of land (which was given by Mr. Nathaniel Kinnison) for which we have a deed legally executed and committed to record on which we have a house erected 18 by 24 comfortably finished, one good stable, and smoke house. the lot is enclosed with new rails We have some furniture not however enough for comfort." *4. The amount of the contract for building the parsonage was \$568.00, and all had been paid but \$168.00. This report was signed by John Hill, N. Kinnison and Abraham Hill. *5. In another report we find

- *1. "Steward's Book" #2. p.9.
2. "Deed Book Pocahontas County Court House.
3. Same as *1.
4. "Steward's Book" #2. pp. 22-23
5. "Steward's Book" #2, p. 23.

that the parsonage was two stories high and that it had seven twelve-paned windows and one of four-lights. The smoke house was 12 X 24 feet. The stable was 14 X 18 feet with a shed for a carriage. All had clapboard roofs. The well was twenty-two feet deep. *1.

By December 18, 1847 we know that our Church on Mill Run had been burned for the Fourth Quarterly Conference was held in the Old Brick Presbyterian Church in the Little Levels. The fact that no mention was made of its destruction in the Quarterly Conference Minutes in either 1847 or 1846 would indicate that it had been burned earlier.

Although there had been missionary collections since 1826, the Circuit's first one on the records that we have was for the year 1847, when there was received from Hill's Class (Hillsboro) \$1.00, and Laughlin's (Mt. Zion) \$2.00, a total for the Charge of \$3.00. At the same time there were several Sunday Schools listed but only two were kept open during the winter months. Little Levels had no school because of no meeting place. There had been a record made of the number of books in the various Sunday School libraries.

The Reverend J. M. Clarke moved from Fincastle, Virginia to this Charge in 1847. The moving expense of \$45.12 was paid by him. The stewards assessed for current expense, on all Church claims and preacher's salary, the following for the Classes of Little Levels for the next year: Callison's \$3.00, Ruckman's \$22.00, McNeill's (Swago or Buckeye) \$18.00., Kinnison's \$42.00., Richard Hill's (Lobelia) \$52.00., New Salem paid the sum of \$55.00. and led the Circuit of fourteen Classes.*2.

At the beginning of the Conference year (the spring of 1852) the Huntersville Circuit was divided into the "Little Levels" and the "Huntersville Circuit". By this time Little Levels was the leading Class.

*1. Steward's Book #2. pp. 22, 23, 53.
 2. Steward's Book #2 p. 21.

The newly organized Little Levels Circuit was composed of the following Classes: Elk, Mt. Pleasant, Hamlin, McNeill's, Ruckman's, Little Levels, Callison's, Droop, McMillion's and Hill's. The Reverend T. F. McClure was the preacher in charge. He was allowed \$135.00. for table and fuel expense, \$25.00. travel expense, and \$248.00. for salary. The Presiding Elder's claim for the year was \$36.00. The total was divided among the several classes. Little Levels was to pay \$100.00., Callison's \$30.00., A. Hill's \$60.00., etc. By this time it was deemed necessary to replace the "Burnt Church" and the village of Academy (Hillsboro) was chosen as the site. *1.

*1. "Steward's Book Huntersville Circuit - Baltimore Conference of the United States of America" Book Second or #2 July 13, 1846- November 13, 1852. pp. 67-69.

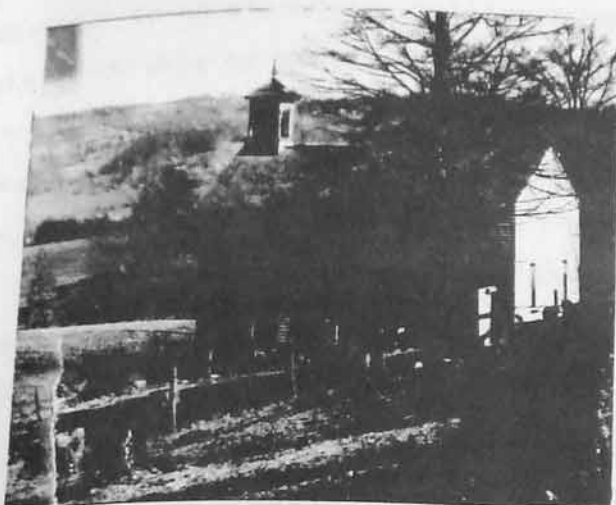
CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST WESLEY CHAPEL AND THE CIVIL WAR

At the Second Quarterly Meeting on August 30, 1862 at the parsonage, G. W. Amiss was appointed to secure the deed for a Church lot at Academy and Israel J. Callison, George Edminston and William Kinnison were appointed a building committee.*1. The lot secured adjoined the parsonage lot and was deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church January 15, 1858 by Mr. Nathaniel Kinnison. It was committed to the care of the following trustees: Israel J. Callison, Richard Hill, James Edminston, George Amiss, Thomas Morrison, Ed. Whiting, J. H. Ruckman, S. Auldrige and G. W. Ruckman.

This Church, named "Wesley Chapel" was on the road going through Academy and stood on a sloping knoll east of the village. They built a rectangular frame building 30 X 60 feet, with a limestone foundation, two stories high which faced the town. The basement had two rooms for use of the Sunday School. Private schools were also Taught in these rooms. Following the policy of John Wesley, in requiring the separation of the sexes in the Churches, two entrances in the back admitted separately the men and women. A balcony across the back of the auditorium was built for the colored people. The pulpit of black walnut sat on a dais being entered by steps on either side. The devout men filled the "amen corner" at each service. The altar rail was of black walnut, too. The lighting of the Church origicallly lighted by candles placed in holders hung on the wall finally gave way to oil lamps and a center chandelier. There were six large windows with shutters on the

*1. Steward's Book #2. p. 71.



WESLEY CHAPEL

Built in
1853

It was near parsonage house built in 1848 and that of the parsonage below.

Parsonage built in 1880's on site of parsonage house built in 1848 and used until the present parsonage was built in 1948.



BIRTHPLACE

of

PEARL BUCK



On U. S. Route
#219
Northeast of
the village of
Hillsboro.

under the direction of a German Scientist. The writer found one of the original shrapnel caps in the Church yard of the present Wesley Chapel. Finally, finding their position flanked on both the right and the left, the Confederates were forced to fall back to Lewisburg. In this, the largest battle ever fought in what is now West Virginia, the home of Joseph Beard (now owned by Mr. Ralph Burns) came into use as a hospital. The Union Soldiers used Wesley Chapel as a barracks. Upon departure they carried with them the silver communion set of our Church. It being later found in a home in Falling Springs (Renick, West Virginia) was repurchased and put into the possession of our Church membership.

These many years the lay members of the Methodist Episcopal Church had not had much part in the Annual Conference. Yet, at the Baltimore Annual Conference in session at the Lutheran Church in Churchville, Augusta County, Virginia Thursday, March 19, 1863, a lay committee, consisting of M. Walton and Joseph Beard (the latter from our own Wesley Chapel), was appointed. Mr. Beard seems to have been quite prominent in the affairs of this Church and of this Conference. At the Conference session of March 10-14, 1864, being present, he was appointed to the Executive Committee of the Home Missionary Society. This appointment may have been due to the activities of his home societies, for in spite of the War in 1864, the Home Missionary Societies of the Levelton Charge reported \$167.50. paid to Missions, while many neighboring parishes were Missionary Charges receiving support from the Mission Board. Among them were: Lewisburg which received \$200.00., Frankfort \$200.00., Sweet Springs \$175.00. and Peterstorn \$150.00.

The first session of the Pocahontas County Court held after the Civil War convened at Wesley Chapel in November, 1865.

Among the strict rules in force at that time was one forbidding ministers to become Masons; another, prohibiting members from competing

for prizes in shooting matches. *1,2.

Mr. Joseph Beard was still hard at work at the Levelton Churches in 1867 as the Missionary Cause for Lewisburg Station paid \$33.00. to the Board of Domestic Missions, while Levelton Charge paid \$33.70. Lewisburg paid to Foreign Missions \$43.30., and Levelton \$45.30. Lewisburg paid the Bishop \$5.00., while Greenbank and Levelton paid \$20.00 each.*3.

- *1. James E. Armstrong, "History of the Old Baltimore Conference" (Baltimore, 1907). p. 217.
- 2. William Price. "History of Pocahontas County, West Virginia" (Marlinton, 1901). p. 187.
- 3. "Annual Minutes of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South" held in Baltimore, Maryland 1868.

Property of
Pocahontas County
Historical Society

CHAPTER VII.

DISTRICT CONFERENCES AND A NEW PARSONAGE

By the spring of 1868 District Conferences were inaugurated in the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Wesley Chapel was for the first time in the "Levelton Charge" of the Lewisburg District. It had 124 members, one being a local preacher.

The fifth session of the Lewisburg District Conference of the Baltimore Conference of the M. E. Church, South was held in Academy, Pocahontas County, West Virginia, September 20-23, 1871. The two pastors, the Reverend Charles A. Joyce and Reverend J. Rembert Smith and one local preacher, the Reverend James E. Moore were present as were two official lay men, Mr. Joseph Beard and Joel Hill of Academy. Mr. Hill was appointed to the Committee on the Spiritual Interests of the Church, Rev. Joyce on the Sunday School Committee, Mr. Beard on the Finance Committee and Rev. Smith on the Committee on Education. *1. The Committee on the Spiritual Interests of the Church of which Mr. Hill was a Member says in part, "Our Church, originating in a desire for the promotion of personal piety, and with special and peculiar means grace best calculated to accomplish this, we have a right to expect that Methodists should be better than the members of other Churches. ... Much depends upon the prudence and faithfulness of the ministry. ... Methodist means of grace faithfully used, . . . (and) we shall again hear it said, "Methodism is Christianity in earnest." *1.

From the Church and Parsonage Committee we learn that there were only three parsonages in the Lewisburg District - one at Academy, another at Centerville, with the District parsonage for the Elder at

*1. "Minutes of the Lewisburg District Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South held in Academy, West Virginia September 20-23, 1871." (Baltimore, 1871).

Lewisburg.*1. George G. Brooke, Sunday School Agent, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was also present.*1.

Sometime early in the eighties, the need being felt for a new parsonage, plans were laid which materialized in a commodious two-story building. This parsonage was a well-built frame structure, L-shaped, of eight rooms, having four rooms in front and four extending back. A back porch extended the length of the dining room and kitchen. A portico on the front later gave way to a wide porch. There was a central hall from which stairs led upstairs. The upper rooms could also be reached from a kitchen stairway. The house had a good-sized basement under it. This parsonage was the home of the ministers until 1948.

Not until 1895 do our Quarterly Conference Records, again, take up the story. Then Rev. A. C. Hamill became the preacher in charge with Rev. W. G. Hammonds as Presiding Elder. The Trustees of Wesley Chapel in 1895 were: George Hill, N. C. B. Kinnison, John J. Beard, W. H. Callison, W. H. Overholt, R. W. Hill, E. H. Moore, Isaac McNeel and George Curry. Many branches had gone out from our Church: Sharon, Old Droop, Marvin Chapel, Buckeye, Swago, Lobelia, Emmanuel, Mt. Lebanon on Droop mountain, and Trinity on Stamping Creek. The preacher's salary was \$600.00. a year.

There were two Sunday Schools on the Charge that were ever-green: Wesley Chapel and Marvin Chapel. Wesley Chapel had an assessment from the District Steward of \$405.00. Every week the Sunday School took up a Missionary offering. As a committee to dig a well and repair the parsonage at Academy, P. W. Hill, J. B. Grimes, G.R. Curry, Isaac McNeel and Jos. S. McNeel were appointed. The value of the parsonage was given as \$1,600.00. In the same year (1895) we had the first record of an

*1. Minutes of the Lewisburg District Conference.

Epworth League. There were thirty- three members of this youth organization on the Charge. An Inter-denominational Young People's Prayer Meeting at Academy that year accomplished much for the spiritual welfare of the community.

Mr. J. William Smith, as far as is known, was the only person to remember the Levelton Circuit in his will. In 1898 he left two hundred dollars, the interest on it to be paid to the Circuit preacher. *1. That same year brought thoughts of future progress at Wesley Chapel. The Reverend John Dills, who is still living at this writing, being here as pastor recorded in July, "Plans are on foot looking to the erection at an early date of a new Church at Academy." Rev. Van Horne came back to assist the pastor in a revival at Wesley Chapel.

*1. "Quarterly Conference Minutes of the Levelton Circuit" (1895-1903)

CHAPTER VIII.

A NEW WESLEY CHAPEL

On May 20, 1899 a building committee appointed at the Quarterly Conference for the new Church in Academy consisted of: R. W. Hill, Ellis McCartney and Rev. John Dills. A deed had been secured a few years before for one acre of land from Mrs. Rella Clark Yeager for the sum of two hundred dollars. The trustees receiving the property were the same as those of the old Wesley Chapel listed previously. After careful study the contract was let to Joseph Knapp of Richlands, Greenbrier County, West Virginia. The contract stipulated that the Church was to be completed by the first of March, 1900. The pastor reported July, 1899, "The new Church enterprise at Wesley Chapel is taking shape and is on a better basis than ever before. I have constantly in mind the song of Decrees of Solomon: 'Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain who build it.' I want to keep this thought uppermost; the building of this church is to be in a supreme sense a religious act."

We do not know the contract price, but \$2,500.00. had been subscribed by November 5, 1899 and \$850.00. had been paid. This new Wesley Chapel was to be a frame building with a shingle roof, a large auditorium (having an elevated floor) with a large annex that could be separated from the main auditorium by huge roller-type doors and have a combined seating capacity of three hundred, the annex to be used for the Sunday School assembly room. Back of the annex and under the same roof were to be placed two Sunday School class rooms. There were to be two porches, one at the front and one on the right side. The pulpit was to be in the left front corner with a door to a small hall. Across the same corner the altar rail was to extend with isles on either side. To the front of the hall just mentioned and under the bell tower, this room became the pastor's study. A door at the back of this hall leads to the choir lo-

adjacent to the pulpit with a seating capacity of twenty-five. The plans specified two outside double-door entrances, one to the auditorium from the front and one beside the annex. There were to be also single door entrances to the pastor's study, the adjoining hall and the Sunday School rooms. The walls of the Church were to be finished with plaster and the ceiling with panels of oak ceiling, varnished.

Mr. McNeill of Buckeye quarried the foundation stones. They were secured from the McCorkle Farm. Mr. C. W. Kinnison hauled the large stones to the building site. Frank Kinnison, his father, offered to furnish the sills, but Mr. Knapp secured them from some other source. The corner stone was quarried and cut from the marble on Stamping Creek from the farm of Captain William L. McNeel. At the laying of the corner stone Neva Dills, the little daughter of the Rev. John H. Dills, placed within it a current copy of the Pocahontas Times and several other articles commemorating the event.

As construction went on, the Rev. John Dills said, "When finished this will be the best Church, except one, in the Lewisburg District." Being so well pleased with it after he became pastor at Corbin Park Methodist Church at Spokane, Washington, he sent back to West Virginia for the architect's plan and had another built just like it there.

Stained glass windows were used throughout the building. The large front window, which is nine feet high and nine feet wide, is a memorial to the Reverend J. D. Martin, who was born January 21, 1859 and died September 2, 1899 during the construction of the Church. He was the Presiding Elder at that time. There are two memorial windows in the Sunday School room. These were donated by R. W. Hill in memory of his father, Joel Hill, born February 23, 1807; died February 18, 1884 and Rebecca Hill, born December 17, 1808; died April 8, 1888. All the windows of Fredonia design were bought from Jacoby Spiess Manufacturing

Company, St. Louis, Missouri at a cost of sixty-eight dollars.

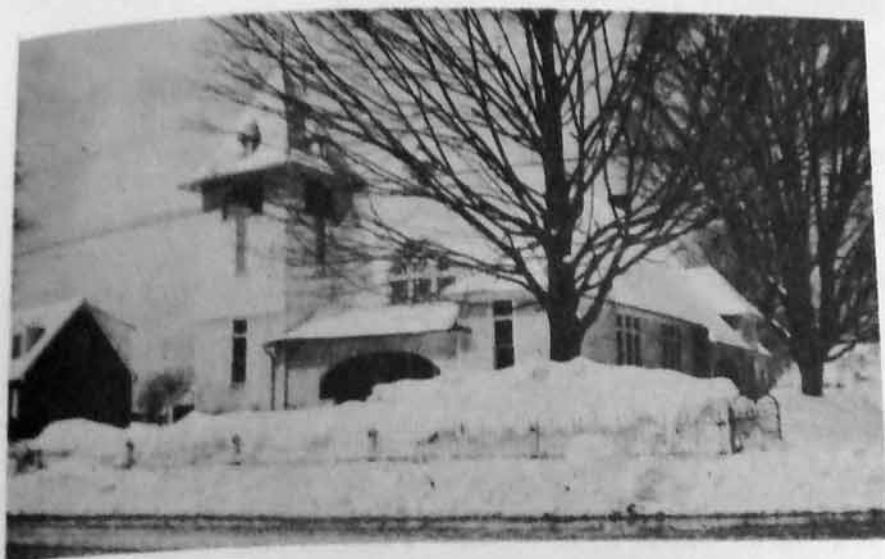
The pulpit desk, the altar rail and the choir railing represent the work of Mr. Asbury Smith, the father of Miss Dice Smith. The desk in the pastor's study was made by Graham LaRue. The pews for the main auditorium were of an unusual design some of which are twenty-two feet long. The benches and one organ used in the Sunday School rooms today came from the "1853 Wesley Chapel." The other organ was bought new for the dedication of the present Chapel. The pictures on the walls, as you see them, were given by the late John Raine, a former steward in the Lewisburg Methodist Church. The large bell in the tower is the gift of the same man. It is considered the finest toned bell in this part of West Virginia. (The bell, altar rail and the pulpit desk of the Old Wesley Chapel were given to the Pleasant Green Methodist Church and they are in use there.) Flag stones for the walks that were placed beside the Church and to the street were hauled in the winter of 1899-1900 on sleds from Bruffey's Creek. At the same time a flagstone walk with a curb was built along the road in front of the Church. This was replaced by a concrete walk constructed by the Works Progress Administration.

The following trustees took part in the dedicatory service October 21, 1900: George W. Callison, Asbury R. Smith, Sidney J. Payne, G. G. Clendenin, Joseph S. McNeel, George R. Curry, Isaac McNeel and R. W. Hill. The Rev. Forest J. Prettyman preached the sermon of dedication. The Rev. John Dills, because of the four year limit then on the itinerant system of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South did not remain long enough to be host at this occasion. This honor was for the Rev. W. J. Whitsell, who came to our Church that spring.

One of the most successful revivals of Wesley Chapel took place in the fall of 1902, under the ministry of the Rev. Charles Lynch. Thirty-three people were converted, and twenty-seven became members of the

Church. It was in July of this year that the Woman's Home Missionary Society with eight charter members was organized. During the year the membership of the Society increased to twenty-five with Mrs. Charles Lynch as the first president. The next year the Rev. J. W. Campbell, a local preacher transferred to the Indian Mission Conference.

The greatest revival ever held in this Church was under the ministry of the Reverend S. R. Neel, and his assistant, the Reverend C. C. Lambert. This meeting resulted in one hundred thirty professions of faith in Christ. Virginia Payne Neel, daughter of the Rev. S. R. Neel was born during his stay here. At this time the salary of the pastor was \$1,000.00., that of his assistant \$500.00. per year.



Present
WESLEY CHAPEL

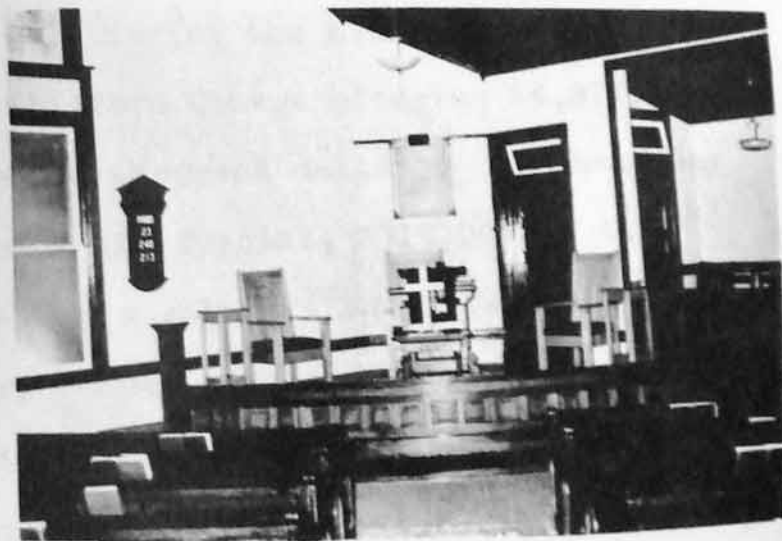
Built in
1900

During the
ministry of
Mr. & Mrs. John Dills

Below: The Interior
of
WESLEY CHAPEL



The Reverend John Dills
who was instrumental in
the building of Wesley
Chapel.



Mrs. John Dills

THE HISTORY

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The history of the United States is a story of the growth of a great nation from a small colony of English settlers. The first settlers came to the New World in search of a better life, and they found it. They built a new society, one of freedom and opportunity, and they made it a great power. The story of the United States is a story of the triumph of the human spirit over adversity, and it is a story that inspires us to this day.

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A SEPARATE CHARGE, HILLSBORO

The Reverend W. D. Eye reported on February 18, 1916 that the matter of having Wesley Chapel and some other congregations set apart as distinct and separate charge was being agitated. (Rev. Eye is an invalid at his home at Bridgewater, Virginia and is the father of Miss Catherine Eye, who spent four years of her childhood in Hillsboro and later became a missionary to Africa. At present she is the Religious Educational Director of Asbury Memorial Methodist Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia.) The next fall that division took place. Sharon and Wesley Chapel were designated the Hillsboro Charge with Mr. Eye as pastor with membership of 273. Wesley Chapel paid \$750.00. of the one thousand dollars set for salary of the charge.

The Centenary movement came in 1920 during the ministry of the Reverend George H. Echols with the Hillsboro Charge pledging \$4,977.50. which exceeded the quota assessed by two thousand dollars. In that year the Charge paid \$250.00. for an Armenia Aid Special, \$716.00. on the Centenary Fund and \$1,400.00. for pastor's salary. For 1922 the Rev. Marke Early reported the first every member canvas for the budget. By 1923 the pastor preached once a month at Kinnison. A Tither's League was organized and George Milburn Curry of Wesley Chapel attended Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky. As pastor of this Charge the Reverend L. Lowance in 1930 reported one hundred reconsecrations.

In the Conference year of 1931-1932 a change in the Circuit took place. Sharon went back to the Levelton Charge and the following churches were added: Renick's Valley, Renick and Mount Zion giving the charge a total membership of 430. The salary of the preacher was twelve hundred dollars. Hillsboro's portion became \$693.00.

By 1934 this was again the Levelton Charge and Wesley Chapel was connected with Marvin Chapel, Seebert, Sharon, Emmanuel and Trinity. The Reverend J. H. Light, who had been pastor of the Levelton Charge, began preaching at Hillsboro.

In 1937 the Reverend L. S. Shires reported six junior choirs on the Circuit. He is remembered for his successful founding of Vacation Bible Schools on this work. He remained as pastor here for five years, which was the longest time any pastor had ever served this Charge or Wesley Chapel. The Reverend R. D. Marshall followed him to serve also five years. During the latter's pastorate one hundred copies of the "Upper Room" were being distributed to the Charge membership. With the placing of Seebert Church in the Levelton Charge, its parsonage became Levelton property. In 1940 the Seebert parsonage was sold because it seemed more convenient for the pastor to live in centrally located Hillsboro. Improvements were made on the Hillsboro parsonage by the money received from this sale - chief among them being the installation of a water system.

CHAPTER X.

A NEW PARSONAGE

In 1947 the Reverend A. J. Schrader, a young man of energy just out of seminary, yet having two years of preaching experience, was sent to Hillsboro. It was through his untiring efforts and courage that a new parsonage became a reality beside Wesley Chapel on the lot which had with admirable foresight been provided for that purpose more than a half century before. At the second Quarterly Conference on February 15, 1948 the following petition was presented:

"Petition: We, the undersigned, duly elected Stewards and Trustees of the Levelton Charge, met in a called meeting on January 27, 1948, at the Methodist Parsonage, in Hillsboro, West Virginia to consider the selling of the Methodist Parsonage.

It was the unanimous opinion and vote of each of us that the Methodist Parsonage should be sold and a new parsonage erected on the lots adjacent to the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church in Hillsboro, West Virginia, and we recommend that the Second Quarterly Conference of February 15, 1948, at Seebert, West Virginia take the appropriate steps to consummate the sale.

Signed:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Mrs. Mary Hogsett | 7. Ivy B. Clendenin | 12. E. S. Newman |
| 2. Boyd Dilley | 8. S. D. Kirk | 13. L. P. Anderson |
| 3. E. C. Sheets | 9. W. A. Arbogast | 14. A. P. Walker |
| 4. Mrs. Dorsey May | 10. G. O. Auldridge | 15. Dorsey May |
| 5. Mrs. C. W. Auldridge | 11. G. H. LaRue | 16. A. J. Schrader |
| 6. Mrs. Winona B. Elmore | | |

"The Quarterly Conference of February 15, 1948 received the petition and the following were appointed as a committee for disposing of the old parsonage in Hillsboro and erecting a new parsonage as planned: E. S. Newman, Dorsey May, Mrs. H. T. Elmore, S. D. Kirk, A. F. Walker, L. P. Anderson and Rev. A. J. Schrader. This committee was to bring its findings to a special Quarterly Conference called by the District Superintendent." August 5, 1948 the Quarterly Conference by unanimous vote instructed the building committee to proceed with the building of the new parsonage.

The subscriptions then reported by S. D. Kirk and E. S. Newman

amounted to five thousand dollars. One thousand was from Marvin Chapel. S. D. Kirk bought the old parsonage for six thousand dollars. The committee was authorized to secure a building contract including plumbing, heating, wiring and lighting fixtures - a "turnkey job" - for fourteen thousand dollars. It had been agreed that upon the sale of the old parsonage the trustees of Wesley Chapel would deed the parcel of ground on which the parsonage was to be built to the trustees of the parsonage and that each Church would have an equity in the new parsonage. The building campaign extended from October 1947- August 6, 1948. The following committees were to be appointed: advisory, finance, correspondence, inspection and subscription. (See supplement for names.) Mr. A. G. Killingsworth of Marlinton, West Virginia was awarded the building contract for \$14,500.00.

The house being completed an auction sale was held to dispose of the old parsonage furniture. The proceeds bought new furniture for the new parsonage. The Reverend and Mrs. A. J. Schrader were the first to live in the new brick parsonage. After only a few months the Conference year ended and Mr. Schrader went back to Duke University to complete the work on his Bachelor of Divinity degree. His ministry was followed by that of Rev. T. E. Painter. The indebtedness remaining on the parsonage when Mr. Painter arrived was \$2,600.00. Through his diligence and the generosity of the members the liquidation of the debt took place during his two year pastorate.

Then came the thought of the formal dedication. On April 15, 1951, three members from each Church were appointed as a committee to plan for it. An invitation was extended to the Area's Bishop, the Reverend Lloyd C. Wicke, of Pittsburg, to dedicate the new dwelling for the use of the Methodist ministry. He graciously consented to come August 26, 1951. Again the Conference acted and Mr. Painter being moved to Killarney,

from Martin County, West Virginia the Reverend Frank A. Johnson became the pastor for the including the dedicatory service.

The day of dedication dawned bright and clear. For days preparation had been made for the guests. Open house was observed at the parsonage throughout the day. The Reverend A. J. Schrader preached the morning sermon of the occasion at Wesley Chapel being assisted in the service by Rev. T. E. Painter with Rev. Frank Johnson presiding. At noon a great picnic dinner provided food for all on the Church lawn. Bishop Wicke and the District Superintendent, the Reverend Clyde Hensley, arrived at late noon. The Bishop preached at two o'clock in the afternoon with the following ministers taking part in the service: A. J. Schrader, T. E. Painter, Clyde Hensley and Frank A. Johnson. The soloist of the occasion a former member of Wesley Chapel, now a member of the choir of Dr. Ralph Sockman's Church in New York City, Mr. Robert Auldridge, son of Mrs. Fenton H. Auldridge of Millpoint, West Virginia, sang "Bless This House" and "The First Psalm". Other former ministers present were: Samuel Register Neel, and the pastor who assisted him here the first year, Curtis Lambert. The Reverend S. R. Neel preached at the evening service. Many former residents and members were here. Their names may be found in the guest book at the parsonage.

This same year (1951) a Union Religious Survey made of the Hillsboro Community showed a population of 660 constituting 197 families. 168 persons belong to the "Methodist Church", 117 to the Presbyterian Church, eighteen to the Disciples of Christ and fourteen to other Churches.

The Wesley Chapel Sunday School under the direction and capable leadership of Graham LaRue has increased its average attendance from seventy-five to eighty-nine. The year 1954-1955 was one of the best years in the Church School.

A "Loyalty" Dinner plan for subscriptions to the budget was inaugurated in 1953 at Wesley Chapel. The Reverend Curtis C. Lambert came as guest speaker for the Dinner held July 15, 1953 at the Hillsboro High School. The fifty members present subscribed forty-three per cent of the budget. The next year the Reverend Stacy Grosscup spoke for our "Loyalty Dinner". One hundred sixteen gathered for the feast and many made their pledges to the budget. It was one of the greatest occasions we have had in our Church. The system has proven its worth in the Church finances. These two years no personal soliciting has been necessary and more has been paid each year. Most important is the Plans' Good Fellowship.

This (1954-1955) is the second year that Sharon's budget has been with Wesley Chapel's and the members of Sharon are an integral part of our Church here. However, we do have a separate roll for Sharon and hold services there once each year. At the beginning of the 1955-1956 Conference year the over all picture of Wesley Chapel is something like this: Church membership 201, Sunday School membership 144, Woman's Society of Christian Service membership 50, and Youth Fellowship 25. Wesley Chapel's Woman's Society of Christian Service and its Youth Fellowship can take their places with those of the other Churches in the District; its Sunday School is advancing; after a lapse of a few years Prayer Services have resumed; its house of worship and its pastor's home are certainly adequate, and its financial reports are good. Indeed, it can be said that the Church does its daily tasks well as it carries on the great denominational program.

Willis Summers followed Frank A. Johnson as pastor coming here from Bartley, West Virginia in June 1955. During his first year he was ill for some time but in spite of this handicap the Sunday School attendance reached ninety-eight and a record Vacation School of fifty, too. He

received a salary of \$2200.00. from Wesley Chapel, alone, which was the most ever paid any preacher by this Church. In his second year the Youth Fellowship reached thirty-five, the adult members of the Sunday School numbered fifty-five, the enrollment of the Church School rose to 154 with fifteen officers and teachers. These last records have not been broken since. In his third year there were fifty-seven in Vacation School and fifty-three in the Woman's Society of Christian Service. These records have not been exceeded.

The Reverend L. E. Milam came in June 1958. His ministry saw the membership go again to two hundred. He baptized fifteen and received nineteen into Church membership at Wesley Chapel. Although he received \$150.00. less than his predecessor at Wesley Chapel the amount paid on World Service by that Church amounted to \$608.00. and they paid a budget of \$5,029.00 as a record of payments on regular expenses and claims without any building project. After two years Rev. Paul Riegel followed him as pastor. Wesley Chapel has only paid the last two years four hundred dollars on World Service and the smallest budget paid the last eight years was in 1961 of \$3,784.00.

The Reverend Owen M. Lee came last year. In fatherhood he excels with twelve children. They will truly rise up and "call him blessed". Eight reside with their parents and fill the parsonage to its capacity. Average attendance is increasing in the Sunday School but the enrollment is down to ninety-eight. The budget paid is again climbing. The people and their pastor seem very happy in their relationship. The report is that the children and young people of the parsonage are real examples in their behaviour. May God bless them in their work with the dependable people of the Little Levels.

This is something of the history that we have inherited. If we, as

Methodist, can keep the insight of our founder, John Wesley, when he said, "This commandment we have from Christ, that he who loves God, loves his brother also ... he feels in his soul a burning restless desire of spending and being spent for Him!", then, and then only, we shall create as great a history as we have inherited.



Levelton Circuit
Parsonage

Built in 1948

Next to
Wesley Chapel

Rev. & Mrs. Owen Lee
in Parsonage living room
the parents
of
twelve children

Eight now reside with
their parents in the above
parsonage.



The author, Frank A Johnson

Now pastor of

The South Fork Charge
at Brandywine, W. Va.

REGULAR METHODIST ITINERANTS OF LITTLE LEVELS

- SERVING:
1. "Mount Tabor" Meeting House or Church, Hillsboro, West Va.
Commonly known as the "White Pole Meeting House"
 2. "Burnt Church" or "Mill Run Methodist Church"
 3. "Brick Church" (Presbyterian) This was used by the
Methodus from the burning of the Mill Run Church until the
building of Wesley Chapel in 1853.
 4. "Wesley Chapel" built in 1853 in Academy, West Virginia
 5. "Wesley Chapel" built in 1900 in Academy now Hillsboro.
- (Numbers in parenthesis indicates years of service here.)

At first our community was in the Greenbrier Circuit organized in 1787 with a total membership on the Circuit of one hundred from the Bedford Circuit adjoining the Holston Circuit.

1. John Smith (1787) was our preacher at the age of twenty-seven years. As a native of Maryland he became a Methodist in 1780. He entered the itinerancy in 1784 and traveled the New Hope and Red Stone Circuits before coming here. Faithfully he labored, not withstanding the infirmity of a feeble constitution, for ten or twelve years. He died in 1812 at the age of fifty-four in Chesterton, Maryland, and rests at Hinson's Chapel. His death was remarkably triumphant. "Come Lord Jesus", he exclaimed. "Come quickly and take my enraptured soul away. I am not afraid to die; I long to be dissolved and see my Savior without a dimming veil between. Death has lost its sting." *20:A, 27:, 31:

2. Richard Swift (1788) He could have been one of the first to visit here for he was in Western Territory in 1785. He became a Christian at the age of eight years. For only six years he itinerated because the wound he received in the Revolutionary War greatly weakened him. He was a pointed, zealous preacher and strict disciplinarian; a happy man, and one that appeared not to fear the face of any. He died in August 1792 at Shoulderbone, Georgia and was blessed with frequent consolations in his last hours." 20:A., 2:.

3. Benjamin Carter (1788). He came here with Swift.

4. James Riggan (1789) was likely a member of the Christmas Conference in 1784 for he had been Admitted on Trial and probably came from Sumner County, Maryland. 2:84, 116.

Jesse Richardson (1789) came here with Riggan having been Received on Trial in 1788. He Located in 1805 and died in 1837. 20:A.

Lasley Matthews (1790). As a Roman Catholic he was converted under the preaching of Joseph Cheuvront, a Frenchman, as a soldier in the

siege of Yorktown. These men were mighty in the Scriptures. They preached, loved and lived holy. Matthews began to travel in 1786 and preached twenty-seven years. "After doing chivalric service he was crowned a fitting victory. He died in 1813 saying, "Glory! Praise Him! My Jesus come!" 30:

7. Salathiel Weeks(1791) being a native of Prince George County, Virginia he was Admitted on Trial in 1788. In May 1792 he attended Conference at Rehoboth. Laboring faithfully for several years he died in 1800, his life having wasted away with consumption at his own home. *20:A.

8. George Martin(1791) here with Weeks.

9. John Kobler (1792). Born in Culpepper, Virginia in 1768 he became an itinerant in 1789 and an Elder later in Kentucky, Tennessee and on to Ohio in 1798. A man of saint-like spirit, dignified and ministerial-bearing, untiring labors in preaching, praying and visiting the sick. Tall, slender with an energy of soul that far surpassed that of the body. His hair black and long, extending over the cape of his coat, his dress neat, with straight breasted coat. He had a most impressive countenance. It showed no ordinary intellectual development, united with sweetness of disposition, unconquerable firmness and uncommon devotion. Many souls were brought to God through his instrumentality." He founded the first work in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was Received into Full Connection at Rehoboth. He died in 1843 at the age of seventy-four. His last words were: "Come Lord Jesus! Come, Lord Jesus, in power! Come quickly!" 30:

10. Francis Acuff (1793). He was born in Culpepper County, Tennessee, From a fiddler in Tennessee he became a Christian and then a preacher. He died in Kentucky April 1796 in the work of the Lord. A young man of genius, much beloved and greatly lamented died in Danville before he was twenty-five years old having volunteered for the hazardous mission in Kentucky. 30:

11. Anthony Sale (1794) Received 1793; Located 1799.

12. James Jones (1795) Received 1794.

13. William Spencer (1796).

14. Richard Bird (1797). Received 1792; Located 1797 likely at the close of his pastorate here. (Membership of the Greenbrier Circuit is 250.)

15. James Ward (1798-1799) Born in 1771 in Summerset County, Maryland, converted in his seventeenth year; Admitted on Trial in 1792 and died at the age of fifty-four years in Floydsburg, Kentucky 1855. He traveled for fifteen years as Preacher in Charge, also, as Presiding Elder, chiefly in the Valley and along the mountains of Virginia. He was ranked among the ablest and most successful men of his times. Multitudes thronged to hear him, and many were saved under his ministry. In the spring of 1807 he was transferred to the Western Conference. He Located in 1814 and was readmitted into the Kentucky Conference in 1829, and then Superannuated in 1840. In 1846 he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and at his request, his name was recorded in his

first Conference in 1848 and placed on the Superannuated list. "His last days had no darkness in them. His sun went down without a cloud." It was thought by some that he took up land in Greenbrier County. He is the one that secured the deed from John McNeel for Mount Tabor Methodist Church and lot in 1799. He came back as Presiding Elder in 1803. 2:478.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE - GREENBRIER AND BOTTECOURT
CIRCUIT

16. Christopher S. Mooring (1800) Born in Surry County, Virginia. He was received on Trial in 1789 and preached until 1825 except for one year that he was ill. His last words regarding the end were: "I am getting near to my long home. O, for submission- submission- resignation- resignation! I feel rather restless, but that restlessness is now measurably gone." That was in 1825 when he gently went to sleep at the age of fifty-eight years. *20:

17. Daniel Ross (1800). Received on Trial 1800; Located 1808.

18. Samuel Steward (1800).

RICHMOND DISTRICT - GREENBRIER CIRCUIT 1801-1802

19. Joseph Pinnell (1801). Received on Trial 1795; Located 1810.

20. Josiah Phillips (1802). Received on Trial 1798; Located 1813.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE - GREENBRIER DISTRICT

21. James Smith (1803). Born in 1782 or 1783 and joined the Baltimore Conference in 1802. He began to preach at sixteen years and was not quite twenty years in 1802. During his ministry he attended three General Conferences as a delegate. "A man of high intellect, of kind and generous feelings, of excessive humor in the familiar aisles of his ministerial bretheren." "One of the most transparent and ingenious of men" and "of manly and stirring eloquence." His language was nervous and chaste. "Taking into account the matter and style of his sermons together with the manner of delivery, I have," says his friend, Bishop Beverley Waugh, "known few more attractive preachers." Six feet high, stout, erect with fair complexion, silky auburn hair, round and benevolent face with one eye a soft and beautiful blue and the other dark hazel, looking black at times. Smith by word and deed and look was winning and attractive. He had remarkable fervor and pathos in prayer. Being in active work for twenty-four years and died in his prime, in peace in Baltimore 1826." *30.

22. Frederick Stier (1804).

23. Edmund Henley (1804). Received on Trial 1803 and died 1808, a native of North Carolina. "Expecting death, he hastened from his Circuit to his father's house, erected a stand at the graveyard, preached from it his own funeral sermon to his old neighbors and friends, and soon after was buried there. ... He was circumspect in his walk. He would shout and pray, exhort and praise God to the last." 20:A.1809.

24. Lasley Matthews (1805) Previously here in 1790.

25. Adam Burke (1805)

26. Thomas Budd (1806) Born in 1783; converted in 1800 and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Received on Trial in 1803; he died in 1810 at the age of twenty-eight years in Philadelphia. As a preacher he was very useful and acceptable, good, pious with open and free manners. He was harassed on his death bed with doubts, "but the cloud suddenly burst, and his heart was filled with joy." 20:

27. Robert Bolton (1806). Received on Trial 1806; Located 1812.

28. Saul Henkle(or Hinkle)? (1807) Received on Trial 1806; Located 1812. After his work here he likely went as a missionary to the Indians.

29. Eli Towne (1808). Received on Trial 1804 and was still traveling in 1828.

30. Joseph Carson (1809). Born in Winchester, Virginia in 1785. Admitted into the Baltimore Conference at Winchester, Virginia in March, 1805. His first appointment was the state of Pennsylvania. "In 1809 his Circuit embraced the whole County of Greenbrier with parts of Bath and Giles in the Commonwealth of Virginia. There were twenty-two appointments for four weeks, some fifty miles apart. He says, "I had been told it was a rude country, and a very hard circuit." This he found true, it being "not very pleasant to use bear's meat for both bread and meat." His recompense was an addition of one hundred and fifty souls to the Church. 2:98,140,149,152,153.

31. James Watts (1809). Born in Greenbrier County, Virginia, in 1782; converted at the age of fourteen and admitted into the Conference in 1804. The first year he rode Prince George and Stafford Circuits. In 1805 being appointed to the Ohio Circuit he traveled thither one hundred miles with Bishop Whatcoat of whom he said, "I found him an excellent man, and strove to profit by his example." At one of his camp meetings he met Bishop Francis Asbury. The privations and labors of Watts rank him among the pioneer heroes of Methodism. On one occasion he had to move at the eve of winter and had his house to build. At the first Quarterly Meeting there he received Twenty-five cents, and in the Second between eleven and twelve dollars. After traversing the whole extent of territory from Lake Erie on the north to Chesapeake Bay on the south for forty-eight years with constancy and unwavering fidelity, he was granted a Superannuated relation. His last sermon was on Easter Sunday from Psalm 138:7 "Though I walk through the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me." His illness continued but six days. As death approached he called his family together and gave them his counsel. His last words were, "God is a refuge in time of trouble," and raising his hands in triumph, he added: "He is my strength. All is Well. Glory! Glory!" 2:479; 30:

32. Beverly Waugh (1810). Born in Fairfax County, Virginia in 1789; joined the Baltimore Conference in 1809; appointed to Washington in 1811 and there his solid abilities and high character secured him the most important positions of his Conference. He was repeatedly appointed to Washington, Baltimore, Fredrick, etc. to 1828 when the General Conference elected him book agent at New York where he served eight years.

He had become one of the prominent men of his denomination, not so much by brilliant or popular qualities, as by his well-balanced faculties, his consummate prudence, his exalted character, his devout temper, Christian amenity and effective preaching. In 1836 the Cincinnati General Conference elected him Bishop. The average number of ministerial appointments made by him per annum was 550. They were made from Maine to Texas, and from Michigan to Georgia. He died at his work by disease of the heart at Baltimore in 1858. 2:480; 31:

33. Nathaniel B. Mills (1811). He was the first Methodist preacher to enter Wyoming Valley being a real hero in his early ministry. Born in New Castle County, Delaware on February 23, 1766; converted at seventeen and in 1787 joined the Baltimore Conference. One time he had for his appointment "Ohio". Being Superannuated in 1824 he became again active from 1825 to 1829 when he was compelled to retire but he preached regularly up until the time of his death whenever possible. He preached on the last Sabbath of his life on Judges 5:31. "He was a holy man of God: he was, indeed, one of the last of that highly interesting class of men, the primitive school of Methodist ministers." For fifty-eight years he served in the ministry. 31:

34. Benedict Reynolds (1812). Received on Trial 1807; Located 1814.

35. James Charles (1813). Received on Trial 1806; Located 1815.

36. Jacob Snyder (1814).

37. John Bull (1815). Received on Trial 1812; Located 1817. It may have been his son, an ex-Chaplain of the Union Army who said in 1863, "Father hated abolition as he hated hell, and considered it the worst heresy out of hell." II. Sup. 11: April 16, 1863.

38. James Watts (1816-1817). Previously here in 1809.

39. Robert Boyd (1818). Received on Trial 1815 and still traveling in 1828.

40. Jacob L. Bromwell (1819). Born in Talbot County, Maryland 1792; converted in early life; Admitted on Trial in 1817; Superannuated in 1826; made Effective in 1830 and soon was Superannuated, in which relation he continued forty years. He died in Morrow County, Indiana in 1871. As an effective preacher he did good service until his throat became affected, then moved to Indiana, where as he was able, he preached in cabins, log school houses, and in the woods. His labors were greatly blessed. He became the founder of a number of Societies in the bounds of Waverly Circuit in the Indiana Conference. Pneumonia finally brought him to his death bed. At times he was rational and once he said to a son-in-law that he was glad there was a country that knew no pain and that he was not far from it. 2:338.

41. John Miller (1819). He was a well known man and greatly esteemed during the extended term of his ministry, a native of Huntington County, Pennsylvania, converted at the age of twenty-two under the preaching of Samuel Davis. He spent Thirty-three years after 1819 in the effective work, sixteen on circuits (Of which Greenbrier was the first), nine in stations and eight on Districts. He died in Westminster,

Maryland in 1878 at the ripe age of ninety-four. He was a self-made man, endowed with solid and practical qualities, a wise counselor, a judicious administrator, and a good pastor. "Tell all the members of the Baltimore Conference, I am dying in the faith, happy in the Lord and want them to meet me in heaven," became the last message to his brethren. 2: 261, 286, 304.

42. Samuel Montgomery (1820). Received on Trial 1807; Located 1825.

43. Amos Smith (1820). Being born in Fredrick County, Virginia April 30, 1795, he died June 30, 1868. Converted at a camp meeting near Winchester, Virginia he served as a soldier in the War of 1812 and took part in the defense of Baltimore during the bombardment of Fort M'Henry. Admitted on Trial 1820 he was sent to Greenbrier Circuit (Then embracing a large extent of territory). He, also, traveled on large Circuits in Pennsylvania. He served as Presiding Elder of the Chambersburg District two years and filled Fayette Station in Baltimore and successive Circuits with remarkable revivals in Maryland. During the closing years of his life he lived in Pennsylvania. Superannuated in 1863, he ceased not to labor preaching often two or three times from Sabbath to Sabbath. A violent attack of rheumatism disabled him for a year. On the evening before his departure he said, "I think I shall go home tonight." "On the morning of January 20, 1868, while sitting in his chair, he fell asleep in Christ." 2:460.

KENTUCKY CONFERENCE - GREENBRIER CIRCUIT

44. Samuel Montgomery (1821). Here the year before the change of Conferences.

45. Amos Smith (1821). Pastor in 1820.

46. Edward Stevenson (1822). Received on Trial 1819 and traveling in the ministry yet in 1828.

47. Harvey Sawyers (1822). As a native of Allegheny County, Virginia he was received into the Kentucky Conference and transferred to the Baltimore Conference. He died in Baltimore September 11, 1827. "He was a young man of deep piety, a useful preacher and highly beloved and respected by those who knew him."

48. James Avers (1823). Received on Trial in 1822.

49. Jonathan G. Tucker (1823).

50. Obadiah Harber (1824). The son of Noah and Judith Harber, born in 1790 was religiously trained and became a Christian in 1802. Licensed to preach in 1821 he became a member of the Conference the same year. "He traveled and labored with great usefulness and died in 1827 or 1828."

51. James Ross (1824).

52. Samuel Ellis (1825). A native of Yorkshire, England, converted a Wesleyan, licensed as a local preacher he emigrated to this country in 1819 and was admitted to Conference in 1821. Solid and useful were

his qualifications as a preacher; industry and punctuality marked his habits; his piety was deep and consistent. Calm and submissive during his last illness he bequeathed a legacy to the missionary cause and died in holy triumph September 24, 1846 on Saint Mary's Circuit in his sixty-fourth year. 2:370.

53. William McDowell (1825). Born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania 1795; converted at twenty-one; Admitted on Trial 1822; traveled five years and died in the full triumph of the faith in 1827. His short race was a successful one, furnishing a bright example of piety and faithful labors. 2:410.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE - ROCHINGHAM DISTRICT - GREENBRIER CIRCUIT

54. John Howell (1826). Born in 1791 at Fairfax, Virginia; admitted in 1823; a "man of solid sense and deep piety, amiable, prudent and sincere; not showy as a preacher, but sound in doctrine, plain in manner and irreproachable in conduct." In all his Circuits seals were given to his ministry. "When time of his departure came, the messenger found him after thirteen years of unremitted labor, dilligently engaged reaping a field ripe to harvest." 2:401.

55. Hezekiah Best (1826). Admitted in 1826; he traveled seven years in the Baltimore Conference, filling some important Charges; Located in 1857 and removed to the state of Georgia. 2:

56. John Howell (1827). Here before in 1826.

57. John Bernard (1827).

58. Henry S. Kepler (1829). Could be the same as Samuel Kepler.

59. Hezekiah Best (1830). Here in 1826.

60. Davis Kennison (1831). We know that he was not the Little Levels "Davis Kinnison".

61. Joseph Sprigg (1831).

62. James Watts (1832). Likely the same man that was here in 1809.

63. James M. Green (1832).

HUNTERSVILLE CHARGE

64. George G. Brooks (1833). Born in Fauquier County, Virginia 1808; died in Berryville, Virginia 1878; closing his fiftieth year of active work. Admitted on Trial in the Baltimore Conference 1829, he was remarkable for constancy and earnestness in his private devotions and for unwavering faith in the Divine promises. His labors were blessed with great success in the conversion of souls. In social life he was genial, courteous, kind and obliging, as a pastor faithful and vigilant and uniformly beloved. He served as Chaplain in the Confederate Army during the War and commanded the respect of all who knew him. Approaching the close of his life and the second year of his service on

Berryville Circuit (Church, South) where scores of souls were converted during a protracted meeting of several weeks, when about to retire for the night he said to his wife, "If I had some items of temporal business attended to, I would be ready to die now." Struck with apoplexy he never spoke again. On the Sunday morning following he was "absent from the body and present with the LORD." *2:337.

65. S. D. Hopkins (1833).

66. J. Wesley Cullum (1834). "Born in East Baltimore 1808; died in Baltimore 1886; converted at eight years of age; admitted on Trial, 1832, and traveled twenty-five years. His pulpit ministrations were peculiarly blessed, particularly to the poor and outcast ones to whom he sought to make himself the instrument of salvation. All revered his genuine godly simplicity and bore testimony to his unswerving fidelity." *2:357.

67. James M. Clarke (1834). "Born in Baltimore County, 1806; died in Duncansville, Pennsylvania, 1880. Converted at eighteen, educated at Dickinson College, he studied and practiced medicine, until he entered the itinerant ranks in 1831. He was a Christian gentleman in the best sense of the word; a true man, a devoted, laborious and successful Methodist preacher. Hundreds were led to the cross under his ministry. He died in the full assurance of faith and in glorious triumph." *2:348.

68. Stephen Smith (1835). A native of Hampshire County, Virginia; converted at the age of thirteen, was admitted on Trial in 1830, at the age of twenty-eight. He labored on large and hard circuits with zeal and success for fourteen years at the end of which in 1844, his health failed and his voice in consequence of preaching in a new, damp Church, and he was retired. He became effective in 1867 and for five years served the charges to which he was assigned. While riding to an appointment on Morgan Circuit he fell from his horse and in a few days exchanged his labors on earth for a home in heaven. "He died of chills and fever." "I feel that God is with me!" was his last exclamation. A self-made man mentally, endowed with high spiritual gifts, he added many souls to the Church and was greatly esteemed on the Charges where he served. His grand daughter, Miss Roberta Dice Smith of Hillsboro, is a member of Wesley Chapel Church. *2:463. His accident is also mentioned in the Autobiography of Bishop William Taylor.

69. J. Planter (1835).

70. C. Hartman (1836).

71. Jacob M'Enally (1837). "Was a Pennsylvanian born in Lancaster County 1794; converted in 1829; he served the Church as an active and energetic layman for ten years and ten years, from 1829 in the faithful and successful work of the ministry. His health failing, he retired in 1839 and lived twenty years at Muncy, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania. He was humble, cheerful and laborious to the extent of his ability, a man of prayer and faith. He died happily March 1859." *2:416.

72. Joseph C. McKeehen (1839). Born near Abbottstown, Pennsylvania 1810; converted in his twentieth year and Admitted on Trial in 1836. For twenty-nine years in active work he was placed on the retired list. As a preacher he was thoroughly Scriptural, sound in doctrine,

earnest, tender and often tearful in delivery. As a man he was unselfish in his nature, and gentle in spirit. Said his son, "I never heard father say an improper word or knew him to do a wrong act." He preached in his last sermon from the text: "Because I live, Ye shall live also." His death came suddenly. 2:418.

73. John W. Osborne (1839)(1840). Located at next General Conference after 1849 and removed to Chicago.

74. Thomas J. Dyerle (1841).

75. Lemuel C. Waters (1842-1843).

76. Samuel Register (1844-1845). Born in Queen Anne's County, Maryland 1818; died 1881 in Prince George's County, Maryland; converted at a camp meeting (1837) near Baltimore and Admitted in 1840. After traveling years on Circuits, most of which involved severe toil, he was stationed in Baltimore and Washington. He served Rockville District and in 1860 became Presiding Elder of the Roanoke District. He was a prominent figure in the famous Conference at Staunton, 1861, and later at Alexandria, Virginia when the majority of the Conference adhered to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and his appointment to the Baltimore District. In the summer of 1869 the Maryland Agricultural College elected him its President; the office he filled with honor to himself and marked advantage to the institution. In 1873 he resigned; he served temporarily at Moorefield, West Virginia; was successively appointed to the Winchester, Washington and East Baltimore Districts in which latter work he closed his labor and life. He was recognized as a man of great native strength of intellect, which he cultivated by habits of thought and reading. In spirit, his heart went out in generous sympathy to all Christians. His honest convictions impelled him to separate himself from those with whom he had long been united in Christian fellowship, yet the severance produced no rupture of brotherly love.

In the pulpit he was pre-eminent, earnest, eloquent and at times overpowering. Such was his sense of dignity of the sacred office that he never compromised it by irreverence of manner or speech. His presence was imposing. The massive frame, the fine arch of the forehead, the deep set eyes, the overhanging brow bespoke no ordinary man. Four times he was elected to the General Conference, prominent in the councils of the Church and in the administration of her affairs. In manners he combined a graceful dignity with gentleness and sweetness. With all the grandeur of his character he had the simplicity of a child. His estimate of himself was far below that held of him by others. His last illness being comparatively short involved great suffering but he passed through the ordeal with resignation and the brightest utterances of joyful hope and rapturous visions of heavenly scenes. He was the grandfather of S. R. Neel, pastor here in 1911-1913. *2:440, 441.

77. George O. Little (1845).

78. Fish (1846).

79. James N. Davis (1846-1847). A local preacher; born near Blacksburg, Virginia 1826; died in Berkely Springs, West Virginia October 4, 1898. Reared in a Christian (Campbellite) Church, he first attended a Methodist meeting in his seventeenth year and was wonderfully converted.

His brother was a bishop in the United Brethren Church. Acting on the advice of this brother he entered the Circleville Academy in Ohio and became adilligent student, especially of the classics. He had, after, entering upon the itinerancy in 1848 some of the hardest work in the Conference but whatever he found to do he did with all his might. His fidelity to every obligation was recognized by all who knew the man. Being a devout Christian none more faithfully studied the Word than he and read all the best authors. He was a fine sermonizer. He had preached an admirable sermon on the Sabbath morning on which he was taken sick. He lingered only two days and went to glory. 2:360.

At a Quarterly Conference held on the Huntersville Circuit in 1846, after making application for license to preach and being examined on the Doctrines and Articles of the Methodist Episcopal Church, his license was not granted, (Must be an error in the Minutes) but in 1847 he is sup- plying the Circuit as preacher in charge until Conference. 20:G.

80. James M. Clark (1847-1849). Here in 1834.

81. J. W. Start (1849-1850).

82. Enoch G. Jamison (1850). Born in Stafford County, Virginia; died near Newport, Giles County, Virginia, December 10, 1880; Admitted on Trial 1841 and served with faithfulness in arduous missions and mountain circuits, often with success. He Located in 1871; readmitted in 1878 and was given a Superannuated relation till his death. Some- what eccentric, he was at the same time zealous, laborious and pious. He died in peace. 2:401.

83. Thomas F. McClure (1852-1853). Born near Allexandria, Pennsylvania, April 3, 1817; died suddenly in the parsonage at Wolfsburg, Penn- sylvania, December 22, 1879; converted in early life and Admitted on Trial in 1841. He was a faithful and consistant Christian minister of more than ordinary abilities, a man of affairs, building Churches, (Help- ed with Little Levels, Wesley Chapel) and paying Church debts and at the same time very effective in the pulpit, sound in doctrine, fearless in his statements of truth, often illustrating them with quaint and strik- ing original remarks, incidents and anecodes. 2:416.

84. Pastor not known (1853-1854).

LEWISBURG DISTRICT- BALTIMORE CONFERENCE - LITTLE LEVELS CHARGE

85. Lorenzo D. Nixon (1854-1855). Born in Loundoun County, Virginia July 28, 1811; converted at seventeen; a local preacher eight years; twenty years, from 1854, in the traveling ministry; a model of meekness and simplicity, systematic in his work and a faithful and laborious ser- vant of Jesus Christ, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. 2:432,433.

86. Pastor not known (1855-1856).

87. Pastor not known (1856-1857).

88. Pastor not known (1857-1858).

89. J. S. Gardner (1858). Admitted on Trial March 1853; living yet in 1907. 2:300.

J. P. Etchinson (1858-1859). Born in Montgomery County, Maryland September 22, 1820; died at Arlington, Maryland May 31, 1876; converted in his seventeenth year and admitted to Conference 1852. A man of rare piety and zeal, undiminished by feeble health, and often by extreme sufferings, he was induced to rest one year, but his love for the Church and the souls of men forced him back to his loved employ. Nevertheless, his work was done. He fell at his post a victim of pneumonia. He said that he loved God and his fellowmen. Far from seeking place, preferment, and the applause of men, his purpose was purely "to do the work of an evangelist and make full proof of his ministry." He died with unflinching confidence in God and conscious victory through the Blood of the Lamb. He adhered with his brethren in 1866 to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. 2: 372.

1. Pastor not known (1860-1861).

2. Pastor the same as in 1860. (1862).

3. James F. Liggett (1863). Born in Greenbrier County, Virginia April 13, 1831; died at Churchville, Virginia in April, 1875; converted at seventeen years of age and entered the Conference in 1855. An earnest preacher (in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.), a faithful pastor, a successful revivalist, he was ready always to go where the appointing power thought he could work best. He died at his post in great peace and triumph. 2:409.

4. A. A. P. Neel (1864-1865). Actually from March 14, 1864- March 9, 1865. S. R. Neel, a son, later was pastor at Little Levels.

5. P. S. E. Sixes (1865-1868). Born in Saint Thomas, Pennsylvania in 1832; died in New Castle, Virginia December 23, 1904; converted in early life and admitted in 1855. His active work in the Conference extended over a period of fourteen years, when failing health made it necessary for him to retire. He resumed his active relation in 1891 and worked acceptably in the Church, South for five years. His feeble health again constrained him to take a Superannuated relation, which he held to the close of his life. Though hindered by a delicate constitution, he was faithful in serving large and mountainous circuits, meeting with success in winning souls to Christ and faithful in the discharge of his duties in both the pulpit and pastorate. 2:458-459.

LEVELTON CHARGE - LEWISBURG DISTRICT - BALTIMORE CONFERENCE

6. J. P. Hyde (1868-1869).

7. J. H. Meridith (1868-1869).

8. James E. Moore (1868-18690). Likely the local preacher helping complete the work of the Conference year.

9. C. A. Joyce (1870-1873).

10. J. Rembert Smith (1871).

11. J. W. Canter (????).

102. L. H. Baldwin (1873-1874). He is remembered as the one who prayed for rain one clear Sunday morning during a drouth and before the service was over the rain was pouring down. 25;
103. Pastor not known (1874-1875).
104. J. E. VanHorn (1875-1878).
105. V. W. Wheeler (1878-1881). He was the father of the late Rev. Dr. Harry Wheeler of the West Virginia Annual Conference.
106. S. Townsend (1881-1884).
107. A. O. Armstrong (1884-1885).
108. L. H. Graybill (1885-1886).
109. W. E. Miller (1886-1890).
110. Christopher Sydenstricker (1890-1894). He was an uncle of Pearl Buck and a brother of the Reverend David Sydenstricker, pastor of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church at the same time.
111. A. C. Hamill (1894-1896).
112. John H. Dills (1896-1900). Pastor here when the present Wesley Chapel was built. He now lives at Route #2, Marion, Virginia. (See suppliment and pictures.)
113. W. J. Whitesell (1900-1902). He died August 7, 1950.
114. Charles Lynch (1902-1905).
115. C. F. McClintic (1905). (Assistant pastor) He did not claim to have a call to the ministry. Later he became warden of the West Virginia Penitentiary at Moundsville, West Virginia. He held several prominent state offices.
116. J. M. York (1905-1908).
117. _____ Roberts (?????).
118. L. B. Atkins (1908-1911).
119. Samuel Register Neel (1911-1913). He came here in the spring of 1911 and left in April 1913. There were fourteen appointments on the charge and many of them were in lumber-towns and lumber camps, most of which no longer exist. Rev. Curtis Lambert assisted him the first year and Rev. A. L. Goodall the second year. Services were held at Wesley Chapel each Sabbath. Many of the boys and girls of Wesley Chapel in those days are still workers in the Church today. S. R. Neel is now retired, having preached fifty years. He now resides at 311 Maryland Avenue, Cumberland, Maryland.
120. Curtis C. Lambert (1911-1912). Born in Pendleton County, West Virginia September 10, 1886; began ministry at Huttonsville in 1909; went to Greenbank as assistant pastor, then came to Hillsboro in

the same capacity. He spent thirty-five years as pastor in Western Virginia and West Virginia. While here as pastor he visited Mr. Edd Bobblett on the mountain above Marvin Chapel. He says, "When I got there I found Mr. Bobblett trying to set up a new hay rake which he had just bought. He had so far failed; I assisted him until it was all put together, when he looked at me and said, 'Preacher, you are good for something, aren't you?' He married while here and the new couple roomed and boarded at Mr. Sam Sheets' home. Rev. Lambert was a graduate of Sherry University at Atlanta, Georgia. He retired in 1954 and became pastor "emeritus" of the Crim Memorial Methodist Church at Phillipi, West Virginia. He remained in that position until his death, January 15, 1963.

121. A. L. Goodell (1912-1913) Assistant to S. R. Neel.

122. W. F. Lowance (1913-1915).

123. W. D. Eye (1915-1919). The son of Benjamin and Barbara Rexrode Eye; born August 6, 1879 at Sugar Grove, West Virginia; moved from Sugar Grove to Listenburg, Pennsylvania where he received license to preach in 1903 and served as junior preacher. In 1904 he was admitted into the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Miss Lela E. Lupton of Gerradstown, West Virginia became his bride in December, 1905. To this union there were born three children. Miss Catherine Eye, a former missionary to Africa, now residing in Harrisonburg, Virginia was the oldest. He went from Hillsboro to the Union Charge. His last Charge before retirement was the Montgomery Circuit, Montevia, Maryland. He retired in June 1945 and married as his second wife, Mrs. Florence Wiseman of Harrisonburg, Virginia. He is an invalid now and resides at Bridgewater, Virginia.

He says concerning Hillsboro that there were never any better folks that lived than those at Hillsboro. The most significant event during his ministry here was the flu epidemic of November 1918 when there were 100 bedfast at one time and only seven left not having the flu that were able to travel and wait upon the ill ones. Mr. Eye was one of the favored at that time.

124. George H. Echols (1919-1923).

125. W. Clarke Early (1923-1925). A native of Staunton, Virginia; he died of a heart attack at Gaithersburg, Maryland at the age of forty years, April 4, 19__; he was admitted to the Baltimore Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1918; ordained deacon 1920 and an elder in 1922. At first he was a junior preacher at Fairfield and Colherstown before coming to Hillsboro, West Virginia. He died while pastor of Fredrick Avenue Methodist Church Baltimore, Maryland. The evening before his death he had preached to the District Conference on "The Unfailing Love". His wife was the former Miss Ruth Bevers and they had one son, Lauress.

126. W. Lawson (1925-1927).

127. Ernest T. Harrison (1927-1930). He arrived in Hillsboro the fall of 1927. Some good heart-warming revivals took place during his ministry here. Their daughter, Florence, was born here. He says, "The three years that we spent in Hillsboro were years of joy, never having been among a more lovely people."

128. L. L. Lowance (1930-1931).

129. G. R. Fringer (1931-1933).

130. W. M. Reynolds (1933-1934).

131. J. H. Light (1934-1936).

132. A. D. Kesler (1936-1937). Born at Stern Hill, three miles east of Roanoke, Virginia 1904; spent boyhood on the farm; he was a traveling salesman and later a farmer. He graduated from Jefferson Senior High School Roanoke, Virginia in 1929 and that fall entered Duke University Durham, North Carolina as a freshman. In 1933 he graduated with an A. B. degree and in 1935 with a B.D. degree. He was admitted to the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in the fall of 1935 and assigned to Paint Bank Circuit. The next year he became pastor of the Levelton Circuit, Hillsboro, West Virginia. He went from here after one year to Hedgesville, West Virginia. His wife was the former Virginia Rankin Peters of Eagle Rock, Virginia. They have two children, A. D., Jr. and Mary.

133. L. S. Shires (1937-1942). Born in a log cabin in the Wolfe Creek Community of Monroe County, West Virginia; from infancy he was taken to Sunday School and preaching. At the age of fourteen he accepted Christ as his Saviour in a revival in a school house. There he led his first prayer meeting. His father was a class leader, too. On Sunday afternoons his mother, brother and he would take their Bibles to a quiet place and read their Bibles verse about. He prized highly that experience. He later taught the one school of his boyhood and was granted a scholarship to Concord Normal School. He finished school at Randolph Macon, completing the four years course in three years. For several years he headed the Allegheny Collegiate Institute at Alderson, a Methodist school.

Coming to Hillsboro from Iron Gate, Virginia he served for five years, longer than any other pastor until then. From here he went to Williamsburg. He was a man of sterling quality, gentle, kind, full of thanksgiving, humility and a Christ-like spirit which made his ministry effective. Mr. Shires was the first man ever granted a vacation with pay by the Levelton Charge. That vacation he spent in a hospital in Baltimore. Illness overtook him in his eighteenth year in the ministry while he was pastor at Buchanan, Virginia. He retired to Iron Gate, Virginia where he continued as an invalid for years until his death.

134. R. D. Marshall (1942-1947). Born August 15, 1886 at Fabius, West Virginia, son of Samuel and Martha Fex Marshall; attended Hardy County Schools and Glenville State Teacher's College; Admitted on Trial March 30, 1917 into the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and he was ordained a deacon in 1920 and an elder in 1923. Before becoming a minister he had taught school for fifteen years. He had been converted in early life. After Levelton he served the Mineral Charge at Headsville, West Virginia. He died in 1951 at Martinsburg, West Virginia. 20:K. (1951 Article by The Reverend Harry Wheeler)

135. A. J. Schrader (1947-1949). Born October 15, 1922 at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; attended Pittsburg city schools and graduated from South Hills High School; graduated from Mount Union, Alliance, Ohio with an A.B. degree June 1944; entered Boston University School of Theology

and became student assistant to the pastor of Tremont Street Methodist Church, Boston, Massachusetts. Serving for one year; in 1945 transferred to Duke Divinity School and completed class studies before becoming pastor here in 1947 and he was ordained deacon at Clarksburg in the fall of 1947. Elder's orders were received in 1949 at Charleston after two years on the Levelton Charge. Returning to Duke he received his B.D. degree in 1950. Transferring to the Virginia Conference his appointment was Herndon, Virginia.

He is largely responsible for the interest in and the building of the new brick parsonage next to Wesley Chapel Church. Through an auction sale the furnishings of the old parsonage were disposed of and new imported mahogany furniture purchased for four rooms at the new parsonage. Kitchen equipment was bought at wholesale at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and installed by the father of the minister. The marble window sills were purchased and given personally by the Reverend Schrader. The parsonage was completed and all but two thousand dollars of the debt paid during his stay here.

136. T. E. Painter (1949-1951). (Then an accepted Supply Pastor).

During his pastorate the main and last part of the debt on the new parsonage was paid. He went to Killarney, West Virginia from here. Now he is pastor of the Burlington Methodist Church at Burlington, West Virginia and is the Director of our Methodist Orphanage there.

137. Frank A. Johnson. (1951-1955). Born at Brookside, West Virginia in 1907, son of Amaziah and Eva Long Johnson; converted at the age of thirteen; called to preach at fifteen; graduated from Asbury College in 1932 with an A.B. degree; received on Trial into the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1932; ordained a deacon 1934 and an Elder 1936; married Mary Elizabeth Doty in 1936 and they have one son, Mark, age fourteen. A brother is in the Virginia Conference of the Methodist Church and a brother-in-law is in the Ohio Conference of the Methodist Church. Since college he has done graduate work at Westminster Theological Seminary and at West Virginia University.

"The National Woman's Christian Temperance Union in order to get sermons which could be published in form, had a preaching contest. Our own Rev. Frank A. Johnson placed second in the Eastern Zone. The subject of his sermon was, 'The Report of Demon Drink to Satanic Majesty.' His honorarium was a check for fifty dollars. When the reports were all in, Mr. Johnson placed third in the National class. The check was for the neat sum of one hundred dollars." (Pocahontas Times, April 14, 1955)

The sermons in the above national contest were published by the Association Press of New York, New York in 1956. Mr. Johnson moved from his Charge to the Gorman Charge in Grant County, West Virginia and served in Garrett County Maryland. While there the Mount Storm Methodist Church made his one of his sermons published called, "Sunday, the Christian Sabbath". In 1958 the Rodeheaver-Hall Mack bought from Mr. Johnson a play for a Christmas service entitled, "The Star Out of Jacob" and published it the following year. It is still on sale by that Company. He is now pastor of the South Fork Charge at Brandywine, West Virginia.

138. Willis Summers (1955-1958). Born at Horner, West Virginia; he is the son of Mrs. Ada H. Summers and the late Roy Summers. Glenville State College gave him his A.B. degree in 1945 and Westminster Theological Seminary gave him a S.T.B. degree in 1950. In 1946 he married Alcis Sparks of Sparks, West Virginia and they have three daughters, Judith Ann, Catherine Marie and Frances Marion. His first full time

pastorate was the Mt. Zion Charge in Calhoun County in 1946. He served in the Huntington and Bluefield Districts after graduating from seminary and came from the Bartley Methodist Church to the Levelton Charge. In 1957 he was honored by being elected Chairman of the Section on World Peace of the West Virginia Conference Board of Christian Social and Economic Relations.

139. L. E. Milam (1958-1960).

140. Paul Riegel (1960-1961).

141. Owen M. Lee (1961- Present pastor.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF PASTORS UNTIL 1963

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Acuff, Francis | 38. Harrison, Earnest T. |
| 2. Airs, James | 39. Hartman, C. |
| 3. Armstrong, A. C. | 40. Henkle, Saul |
| 4. Atkins, L. B. | 41. Henley, Edmund |
| 5. Baldwin, L. H. | 42. Hopkins, S. D. |
| 6. Bernard, Joab | 43. Howell, John |
| 7. Best, Hezekiah | 44. Hyde, J. P. |
| 8. Bird, Richard | 45. Jamison, Enoch G. |
| 9. Bolton, Robert | 46. Johnson, Frank A. |
| 10. Boyd, Robert | 47. Jones, James |
| 11. Bromwell, Jacob L. | 48. Joyce, C. A. |
| 12. Brooke, George E. | 49. Kennison, Davis |
| 13. Budd, Thomas | 50. Kepler, Henry S. |
| 14. Bull, John | 51. Kesler, A. D. |
| 15. Burge, Adam | 52. Kobler, John |
| 16. Carson, Joseph | 53. Lambert, C. G. |
| 17. Carter, Benjamin | 54. Lawson, W. |
| 18. Carter, J. W. | 55. Lee, Owen M. |
| 19. Charles, James | 56. Liggett, James P. |
| 20. Clarke, James M. | 57. Light, J. H. |
| 21. Cullam, J. Wesley | 58. Little, George O. |
| 22. Davis, James M. | 59. Lowance, L. L. |
| 23. Dills, John H. | 60. Lowance, W. P. |
| 24. Dryle, Thomas J. | 61. Lynch, Charles |
| 25. Early W. Clarke | 62. Marshall, R. D. |
| 26. Ecols, George H. | 63. Martin, George |
| 27. Ellis, Samuel | 64. Matthews, Lasley |
| 28. Etchinson, J. P. | 65. McClintic, Cliff F. |
| 29. Eye, W. D. | 66. McClure, Thomas F. |
| 30. Fish, _____ | 67. McDowell, William |
| 31. Fringer, G. R. | 68. McEnnally, Jacob |
| 32. Gardiner, J. S. | 69. McKeehen, Joseph G. |
| 33. Goodal, A. L. | 70. Meridith, J. H. |
| 34. Graybill, L. H. | 71. Milam, L. E. |
| 35. Green, James M. | 72. Miller, John |
| 36. Hamill, A. C. | 73. Miller, W. E. |
| 37. Harber, Obadiah | 74. Mills, Nathaniel B. |

- in 1946. He was
 sitting from
 elton Charge,
 Section on
 an Social
101. Montgomery, Samuel
 102. Moore, James E.
 103. Mooring, Christopher S.
 104. Neel, A. A. P.
 105. Neel, S. R.
 106. Nixen, Lorenza D.
 107. Osborne, John W.
 108. Osborne, T. E.
 109. Painter, William
 110. Phebus, Josiah
 111. Phillips, Joseph
 112. Pinnell, Joseph
 113. Planter, J.
 114. Poythress, Francis
 115. Register, Samuel
 116. Reynolds, Benedict
 117. Richardson, Jesse
 118. Riegal, Paul R.
 119. Riffin, James
 120. Roberts, Daniel
 121. Ross, Daniel
 122. Ross, James
 123. Sale, Anthony
 124. Sawyers, Harvey
 125. Schrader, A. J.
 126. Shires, L. S.
 127. Sixes, P. S. E.
 128. Smith, Amos
 129. Smith, James

103. Smith, John
104. Smith, J. Rembert
105. Smith, Stephen
106. Snyder, Jacob
107. Spencer, William
108. Sprigg, Joseph
109. Start, J. W.
110. Stenemson, Edward
111. Steward, Samuel
112. Stier, Fredrick
113. Summers, Willis
114. Swift, Richard
115. Sydenstricker, Cris
116. Towne, Eli
117. Townsend, S.
118. Tucker, Johathan A.
119. VanHorn, J. H.
120. Ward, James
121. Waters, Lemuel C.
122. Watts, James
123. Waugh, Beverley
124. Weeks, Salathiel
125. Wheeler, V. W.
126. Whitesell, W. J.
127. York, J. M.

PREACHERS AND LOCAL PREACHERS WHO MAY HAVE HELD SERVICES AT THE WHITE POLE MEETING HOUSE

Jacob Cook, the brother of Valentine Cook, Sr., settled with him near Union, West Virginia. They were cousins of Captain Cook, the celebrated voyager. Jacob Cook was a local preacher but traveled extensively.

Valentine Cook, Jr. was one of the most unique characters. He was born in Pennsylvania, having but few advantages, yet he managed to acquire the rudiments of an English and German education. His fondness for hunting, his providential escape from the Indians, his fine qualities of mind and heart, his happy conversion under the preaching of the Methodist itinerant, his call to preach and his rapid progress at Cokesbury College are attractively told in Dr. Edward Stevenson's biographical sketch. "Wonderful in the pulpit; overwhelming in the discussion of Methodist doctrine; useful and successful until his health failed him; Principal of Bethel Academy in Kentucky (The second Methodist educational institution in America); indefatigable in seeking the lost; and to the very end of his life, instrumental in saving multitudes of souls, he left an indelible impression on the various sections of the wide world through which he traveled. He was an instance of triumph of intellect and goodness over singular physical defects. A figure without symmetry, with long limbs, stoop shouldered, a long neck projected at

right angles from between his shoulders, remarkably low forehead, small deeply sunken hazl eyes, a prominent Roman nose, a large mouth, thin lips, sallow complexion, coarse black hair, with here and there a thread of gray - he presented an eccentric appearance that could not fail to impress of its very singularity. But when he began to speak all these peculiarities were forgotten as attention was arrested by the tones of his voice and words that burned by the Spirit's mighty power into the hearts of his hearers produced wonderful effect in comforting believers and saving sinners. He died as he had lived, strong in faith, giving glory to God."

William Phoebus (---- 1785). May have been the first preacher sent to what became the Greenbrier Circuit. Born in Somerset, Connecticut in 1754; he was one of the earliest Methodist in this part of the state. After traveling about fifty years he located and studied and practiced medicine in the city of New York until 1806 when he reentered the Conference. He occupied important positions until 1821 when he became a Supernumery member. He died in 1831 at the age of seventy-seven years. He attended the Christmas Conference where the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. He was characterized by a philosophic cast of mind, an able but not a popular preacher and possessed of literary abilities much superior to the average attainments of his fellow laborers. He edited a magazine for some time in behalf of the Methodists. His brethren pronounced him in the Minutes Obituary: "A man of great integrity of character, uniformly pious, deeply read in the Scriptures, a sound, experimental and practical preacher", and, "He sweetly fell asleep in Jesus." (Minutes of 1832).

THE BEAR STORY OF 1790 *

"A family by the name of Naylor was living about the top of the Gillian mountain. Their house stood on the Stamping Creek side of the field where the Early Ruckman barn now stands. The mother being sick, the father took a child of the family to the field where he was plowing and left it on a stump (likely in a hollow stump) or about the furrow. He later was horrified to see a bear carrying away his child. The alarm was screamed over the mountain side to the Cochran home. Some men gave chase to the bear and following it they found only the feet of the child. There is today a field only a short distance from where the White Pole Meeting House stood called the "Naylor" Field. It is on the farm of Mr. John Wimer of Millpoint, West Virginia. It was named for the child, it being the place from which the bear carried the child." 25:

*The date given by Bishop Asbury in his Journal of his visit to John McNeel's in 1790.

FIRST SETTLERS IN LITTLE LEVELS

John McNeel, Edward Kinnison, Charles Kinnison, Jacob Kinnison, John Hill, James Callison, Richard Hill, James Burnsides, James Lewis, John Dick, Samuel Gilliland, James Brindle, Charles Clendenning, Thomas David, John Day, John Davis, Nathaniel Day, Nathan Gillion, John McCennis, John Poage, Stephen Sewell and the Oldhams.

LAY DELEGATES TO ANNUAL CONFERENCES

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Joseph Beard - 1863. | 6. Mrs. G. W. Clendenin - 1953. |
| Richard Auldridge - 1940, 1941. | 7. Miss R. Dice Smith - 1954, 1957, 1961. |
| L. I. Anderson - 1942, 1943. | 8. A. F. Walker - 1956. |
| S. D. Kirk - 1949, 1950, 1952. | 9. Miss Margaret LaRue - 1958, 1959. |
| S. C. Sheets - 1951. | 10. Mrs. Belle Auldridge - 1960. |

NOTE: For the absent years from 1944 to the present time the lay delegates were from the other Churches of the Circuit.

CHURCH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AND THE YEAR OF ELECTION

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Joel Hill | 6. Samuel Sheets - 1927 |
| 2. R. W. Hill - 1895 | 7. S. D. Kirk - 1931. |
| 3. Dr. T. G. Cook - 1908 | 8. G. W. Clendenin - 1932 |
| 4. John Raine - 1910 | 9. G. H. LaRue - 1948 |
| 5. Frank P. Kidd - 1915 | *10. Mrs. Clinton Hill - 1956- |
- * Denotes present superintendent.
(Our records are very incomplete until 1895.)

SOME OF THE DELEGATES TO DISTRICT CONFERENCES FROM WESLEY CHAPEL (With dates of election or service)

1. Joseph Beard - 1871
2. Joel Hill - 1871
3. R. W. Hill - 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903.
4. G. R. Curry - 1897, 1899, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1923, 1924.
5. Dr. C. W. Eskridge - 1898, 1911.
6. Isaac McNeel - 1898.
7. G. W. Callison - 1900, 1915, 1918.
8. S. G. Payne - 1908, 1911, 1915.
9. H. W. Burgess - 1909.
10. H. W. Harper - 1916, 1917, 1929.
11. Samuel Sheets - 1916, 1919, 1925, 1927, 1929, 1930.
12. Sherman McCarty - 1917.
13. G. L. Carlisle - 1919, 1927.
14. A. C. Stillwell - 1919, 1923.
15. Miss Margaret LaRue - 1919, 1959, 1960.
16. Miss R. Dice Smith - 1920, 1930, 1933, 1944.
17. G. P. Hill - 1924, 1927.
18. Mrs. H. W. Harper - 1925.
19. Gilbert Morrison - 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939.
20. Mrs. Carl Beard - 1929, 1930, 1940, 1941, 1942.
21. R. H. Auldridge - 1930.

22. Mrs. R. H. Auldrige - 1930, 1960, 1961.
23. Frank K. Johnson - 1933, 1934.
24. Mrs. I. B. Shrader - 1934.
25. E. C. Sheets - 1935, 1938.
26. Wilbur Moore - 1935.
27. Mrs. J. H. Light - 1935.
28. Denny Ruchman - 1939.
29. Mrs. G. W. Clendenin - 1939.
30. Dr. Lillie Holliday - 1942.
31. Mrs. Marvin Smith - 1943, 1944, 1945.
32. G. W. Clendenin - 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947.
33. G. H. LaRue - 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955.
34. A. F. Walker - 1948.
35. Mrs. George Hill - 1948, 1949, 1950.
36. Lloyd Payne - 1951.
37. Mrs. Guy Kinnison - 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954.
38. Mrs. Clinton Hill - 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962.
39. Miss Jane Sheets - 1955.

SOME WESLEY CHAPEL LAY LEADERS
(And dates of election)

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. John Raine - 1910 | 8. Frank K. Johnson - 1931 |
| 2. E. P. Kidd - 1914 | 9. E. C. Sheets - 1938 |
| 3. A. C. Stillwell - 1917 | 10. Chester C. Farmer - 1951 |
| 4. Samuel Sheets - 1919 | 11. Elmer Wymer - 1954 |
| 5. George Hill - 1925 | 12. Denny Ruckman - 1957 |
| 6. S. D. Kirk - 1926 | 13. Marion Hill - 1959 |
| 7. George L. Carslile - 1927 | 14. Graham LaRue - 1961 |

PRESIDENTS OF WOMAN'S SOCIETIES OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Mrs. Carl Beard - 1940 | 6. Miss Jane Sheets - 1954 |
| 2. Mrs. Marvin Smith - 1943 | 7. Mrs. Elmer Wymer - 1956 |
| 3. Mrs. Lovie Vaubhn - 1946 | 8. Miss Margaret LaRue - 1957 |
| 4. Mrs. George Hill - 1948 | 9. Mrs. Joseph Smith - 1959 |
| 5. Mrs. Guy Kinnison - 1951 | |

PRESIDENTS OF MISSIONARY SOCIETY

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Mrs. W. D. Eye - 1916 | 2. Miss R. Dice Smith |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|

JUNIOR STEWARDS OF WESLEY CHAPEL AND THE TIME OF THEIR ELECTION

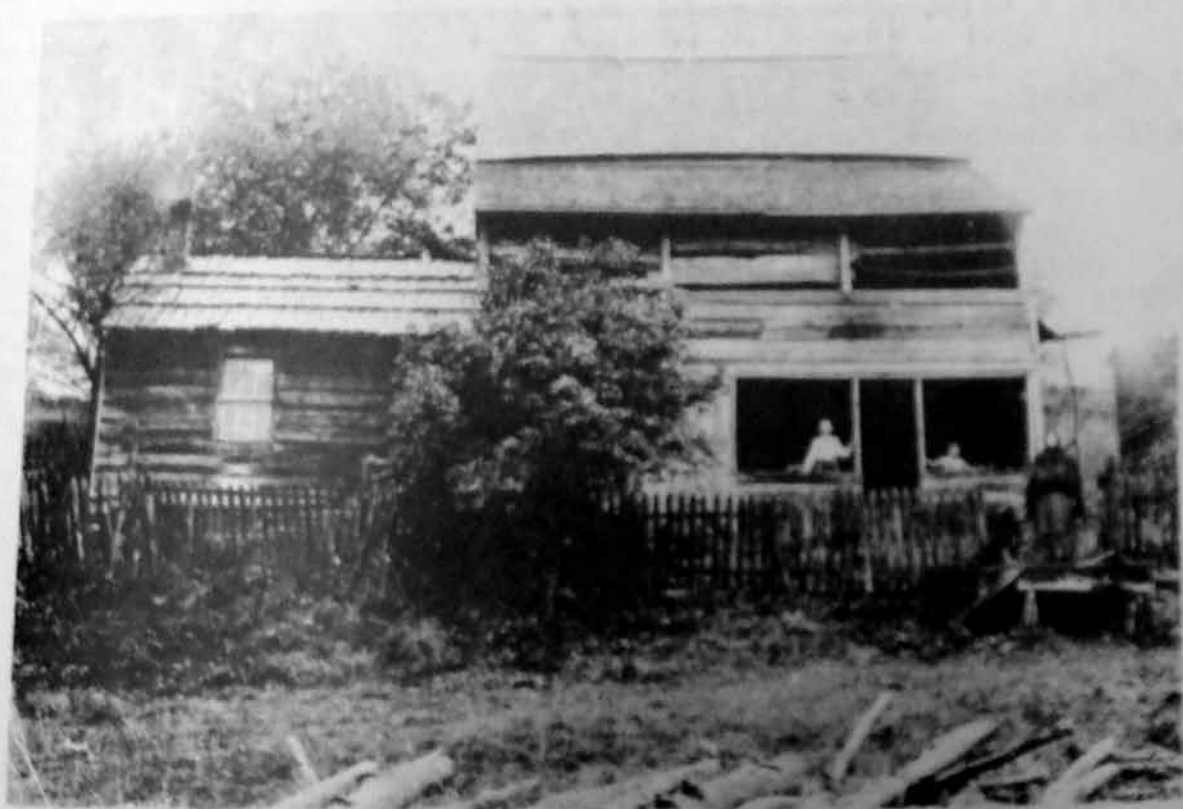
- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Milburn George Curry - 1923 | 4. Tyler Pope - 1923 |
| 2. Gail Auldrige - 1923 | 5. Claude Warren - 1923 |
| 3. Glen Smith - 1923 | 6. Gilbert Morrison - 1923 |



George Milburn Curry
Hillsboro, W. Va.

This is the picture of Milburn Curry when he was a senior in the Hillsboro High School and a Junior Steward at Wesley Chapel. His father before him served many years as an official of this church.

Dr. George Milburn Curry is now a member of the Editorial Board of the Methodist Church at Nashville, Tennessee.



The William Clendenen Home built at the entrance of the "old Cave Fort Clendenen" at the mouth of "Stamping Creek." The foundation of this home can still be seen at this writing.

SOME OF THE EPWORTH LEAGUE PRESIDENTS

C. W. Eskridge - 1907
 Mrs. S. R. Neel - 1911
 Mrs. R. Dice Smith - 1914
 Miss Margaret LaRue - 1917

5. Mrs. Dakota Nottingham - 1930
 6. Lewis W. Lowance - 1931
 7. Lucy Auldridge - 1933

PRESIDENTS OF YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Ruth Hill - 1944
 Mary E. Dalton - 1946
 Bonita Anderson - 1948
 Thomas Walker - 1949
 Patty Burns - 1951

6. Janice Walker - 1953
 7. Ruth Moore - 1954
 8. Louise Hollandsworth - 1955
 9. Wilma Moore - 1959
 10. Peggy Evans - 1961-

STEWARDS OF WESLEY CHAPELS

(With the dates of their first election so far as known)

1. John Hill - 1848
 2. John McNeill - 1848
 3. G. W. Amis - 1852
 4. James Edmiston - 1852
 5. George R. Curry - 1895
 6. R. W. Hill - 1895
 7. Ellis McCarty - 1895-1934.
 8. N. C. B. Kinnison - 1895
 9. George G. Clendenin - 1895
 10. E. H. Moore - 1895
 11. Joseph S. McNeel - 1898
 12. C. W. Eskridge - 1898
 13. H. W. Burgess - 1901
 14. Frank Hill - 1902
 15. G. W. Callison - 1902
 16. Dr. T. G. Cook - 1907
 17. W. H. Burgess - 1907
 18. T. C. Burgess - 1907
 19. W. D. Clark - 1907
 20. S. J. Payne - 1908
 21. Jolien Raine - 1910
 22. John Raine - 1911
 23. R. H. Callison - 1911
 24. H. A. Overholt - 1913
 25. H. W. Harper - 1913
 26. Sherman McCarty - 1913
 27. Joseph S. McNeel - 1913
 28. Samuel Sheets - 1914
 29. J. K. Marshall - 1917
 30. A. C. Stillwell - 1917
 31. G. L. Carlisle - 1919
 32. George L. Clark - 1925
 33. S. D. Kirk - 1925
 34. George W. Clendenin - 1926
 35. Gilbert Morrison - 1927

36. E. C. Sheets - 1928
 37. R. H. Auldridge - 1930
 *38. Miss R. Dice Smith - 1931
 39. R. W. Rogers - 1932
 40. Mrs. Frank Harper - 1934
 41. Pauline Shrader - 1934
 *42. Mrs. G. W. Clendenin - 1935
 *43. A. F. Walker - 1935
 44. Lucy Auldridge - 1935
 45. Denny Rockman - 1938
 46. Richard McCarty - 1938
 47. Dr. Lillie Holiday - 1938
 48. L. P. Anderson - 1938
 49. Guy Kinnison - 1943
 50. Carl A. Rund - 1943
 51. Elmer Wymer - 1948
 52. C. C. Farmer - 1950
 53. John Troudt - 1950
 *54. Mrs. Clinton Hill - 1952
 *55. Mrs. Cleveland Harvey - 1954
 56. Remus May - 1955
 57. Dan Skaggs - 1955
 *58. Graham LaRue - 1957
 59. Mrs. I. B. Shrader - 1957
 60. Mrs. Georgia Vaughn - 1958
 *61. Ralph Burns - 1959
 *62. Mrs. James Workman II. - 1959
 *63. Mrs. William Fox - 1960
 *64. Mrs. Ernest Beverage - 1960
 *65. Mrs. Marion Hill - 1960
 *66. Mrs. Virgil Fowler - 1960
 *67. Mrs. Sanford Kirk - 1960
 *68. Harper Hill - 1960
 *69. Mrs. Darrel Brown - 1960
 *70. Mrs. William Workman - 1960

* Indicates present stewards.

CHURCH TRUSTEES
MOUNT TABOR

1. Thomas Scott - 1799
2. John E. Pinnel - 1799
3. Richard Hill - 1799
4. Griffith Evans - 1799
5. Jacob Kinnison - 1799

6. Alexander Waddell - 1799
7. William Waddell - 1799
8. James Lewis - 1799
9. Jonathan McNeill - 1799

TRUSTEES OF "BURNT CHURCH" OR "MILL RUN CHURCH" ACADEMY, WEST VA.

10. William Edminston - 1830
11. Andrew Edminston - 1830
12. John Grimes - 1830
13. Richard Hill - 1830

14. Mark Kinnison - 1830
15. Abraham Hill - 1830
16. Nathaniel Kinnison - 1830

TRUSTEES OF WESLEY CHAPELS
(Time Of Election)

17. Israel J. Kinnison - 1853
18. Richard Hill - 1853
19. James Edminston - 1853
20. George Amiss - 1853
21. Thomas Morrison - 1853
22. E. Whiting - 1853
23. J. H. Ruckman - 1853
24. S. Auldridge - 1853
25. O. W. Ruckman - 1853
26. George Hill - 1895
27. N. C. B. Kinnison - 1895
28. W. H. Callison - 1895
29. W. H. Overholt - 1895
30. R. W. Hill - 1895
31. E. H. Moore - 1895
32. Isaac McNeel - 1895
33. George R. Curry - 1895
34. J. S. McNeel - 1897
35. G. G. Clendenin - 1897
36. A. R. Smith - 1898
37. Sidney Payne - 1898
38. George W. Callison - 1900
39. F. R. Hill - 1907

40. G. W. Fuller - 1909
41. Ellis McCarty - 1914
42. J. Lanty McNeel - 1917
43. F. P. Kidd - 1923
- *44. G. W. Clendenin - 1931
45. R. W. Rogers - 1931
46. S. D. Kirk - 1931
- *47. E. C. Sheets - 1931
48. G. L. Carlisle - 1932
49. A. F. Walker - 1936
- *50. R. Dice Smith - 1943
51. Mrs. G. W. Clendenin - 1948
52. L. P. Anderson - 1948
53. Mrs. Guy Kinnison - 1948
- *54. G. H. LaRue - 1948
55. Mrs. Georgia Vaughn - 1948
- *56. D. S. Ruckman - 1951
57. Harrel McCarty - 1950, 1954, 1957,
- *58. Alfred Callison - 1955
59. Guy Kinnison - 1955, 1957.
60. Dan Skaggs - 1955
61. William Fox - 1960 (Deceased)
- *62. Sanford Kirk - 1962

PARSONAGE TRUSTEES

1. James Wanless - 1847
2. John Hill - 1847
3. Abraham Hill - 1847
4. John McNeill - 1847
5. George Burner - 1847
6. William Young - 1847
7. John H. Ruckman - 1847
8. John Wooddell - 1847
9. Nathaniel Kinnison - 1847

10. Isaac McNeel - 1907
11. J. S. McNeel - 1907
12. R. W. Hill - 1907
13. Ellis McCarty - 1907
14. Asbury R. Smith - 1907
15. S. J. Payne - 1907
16. G. W. Callison - 1907
17. F. R. Hill - 1907
18. N. C. B. Kinnison - 1914

(continued on p. 69)

(Parsonage Trustees Continued)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| J. D. Payne - 1914 | 29. D. S. Ruckman - 1944 |
| H. W. Harper - 1917 | 30. L. P. Anderson - 1948 |
| A. C. Stillwell - 1917 | 31. S. D. Kirk - 1948 |
| Richard McCarty - 1918 | 32. Mrs. I. B. Shrader - 1948 |
| A. F. Walker - 1924 | 33. Ralph Burns - 1948 |
| Ernest T. Harrison - 1927 | 34. Denver Hollandsworth - 1952 |
| L. L. Lowance - 1930 | 35. Charles Kramer - 1956 |
| R. W. Rogers - 1931 | *36. Remus May - |
| R. C. Sheets - 1934 | *37. W. D. Workman - |
| *E. C. LaRue - 1936 | *38. Wilfred Bruffey - |

* Present Trustees

PLEDGES ON THE ADVANCE FOR CHRIST - WESLEY CHAPEL 1950

Circle #1. of the Woman's Society of Christian Service	\$100.00.
Circle #2. of the Woman's Society of Christian Service	100.00.
Men's Bible Class	100.00.
Methodist Youth Fellowship	40.00.
TOTAL		\$340.00.

RULING ELDERS

Ruling Elders of the "Brick" Presbyterian Church that gave permission for Methodist Services to be held in their Church after the burning of the Mill Run Church until the building of Wesley Chapel in 1853 were: George W. Poage, Samuel D. Poage and Josiah Beard.

Although this brick Church was built in 1828, in 1830 the Church was without any Ruling Elders so it had to be reorganized. On August 28, 1830 Rev. Samuel Graham re-instituted the Church administrative functions and work started a-new with twelve members as follows: George Poage, Josiah Beard, John Jordan*, William Bradshaw, Samuel D. Poage, William E. Hall, Martha Poage, E. Poage, M. Poage, Nancy Cackley, Jane Bradshaw, and Mrs. McDonald. The following were elected Elders: Josiah Beard, John Jordan, George Poage, and Samuel D. Poage.

* John Jordan is the man who with his wife gave the land for the Mill Run Church and was buried on the site of that Church. His wife, the daughter of the Pioneer John McNeel is buried by his side. See photo.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

The Woman's Home Missionary Society was organized for the first time in July 1902, with eight members and Mrs. Charles Lynch as president. By the end of the year there were twenty-five members. The Ladies Aid followed this organization. Then following the union of the three great branches of Methodism in 1939 the Woman's Society of Christian Service was organized in 1940 with Mrs. Carl Beard as president. It consisted of two Circles; one of the Circles contained the older women and the other the younger. Both Circles became effective in the work of the Church. They paid a large sum on the "Advance for Christ" and have been paying yearly about one hundred dollars on Church insurance. There are three Circles now. (1955)

EPWORTH LEAGUE AND YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

The first record of an Epworth League at Wesley Chapel is in 1895. For a short time it ceased to function but was reorganized by Dr. C. W. Eskridge in the early 1900's with a membership of thirty-five and it met twice a week: on Sunday and Tuesday evenings. This League bought a window for a new Church at Saleno, Virginia on July 30, 1909. For two years, 1912, 1913, it paid an African Special of twenty-five dollars per year. Honor came to the organization in 1918 when it won both the County and District banners at the District Convention held at Durbin, West Virginia. In 1923 the League assumed and paid two hundred dollars toward the painting of the Church inside and out. The highest membership was attained in March, 1931.

The Epworth League changed to the Youth Fellowship and it set a second high record of membership with fifty-five members in 1948. In this year great prominence came to the Methodist Youth Fellowship of Wesley Chapel when through the efforts of the Reverend A. J. Schrader eleven members attended the National Youth Fellowship Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1949 the Fellowship pledged and paid two hundred dollars on the new parsonage. In 1951 it paid forty dollars on the "Advance for Christ".

COMMITTEES ON BUILDING PARSONAGE - ELECTED MAY 10, 1948

Advisory

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. S. D. Kirk | 5. E. S. Newman | 9. Mrs. T. H. Elmore |
| 2. A. F. Walker | 6. Clyde Auldrige | 10. Mrs. Dorsey May |
| 3. G. H. LaRue | 7. Mrs. Mary Hogsett | 11. Milton Vaughan |
| 4. E. C. Sheets | 8. Boyd Dilley | 12. L. P. Anderson |

Correspondence

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Miss Ethel May | 4. Mrs. Milton Vaughan | 7. Mrs. George Clendenin |
| 2. Mrs. Earl Slavin | 5. Mrs. Okey McClain | 8. Mrs. George Hill |
| 3. Mrs. Walter Arbogast | 6. Mrs. Clarke Gum | 9. Mrs. I. B. Shrader |

Subscription

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. E. S. Newman, chairman | 6. Remus May | 10. Mrs. Mary Hogsett |
| 2. Clyde Auldrige | 7. Milton Vaughan | 11. L. P. Anderson |
| 3. Boyd Dilley | 8. S. D. Kirk | 12. A. F. Walker |
| 4. Mrs. Walter Arbogast | 9. Ralph Burns | 13. Mrs. I. B. Shrader |
| 5. Mrs. H. T. Elmore | | |

Inspection

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Ralph Burns | 5. Mrs. H. T. Elmore |
| 2. L. P. Anderson | 6. Mrs. Dorsey May |
| 3. A. F. Walker | 7. Mrs. Mary Hogsett |
| 4. E. S. Newman | 8. Milton Vaughan |

1955 FURNISHINGS OF THE PRESENT PARSONAGE

Imported mahogany furniture for the living room, dining room, and two bed rooms was bought from the James Electrical Company of Mebane.

The Company gave a large discount, and the total fact-
 cost was \$751.00. Expense of the trip to bring the furniture was
 ninety-nine dollars and fifty cents. The sinks, cabinets, lights and
 fixtures for the kitchen were bought at cost from A. D. Schrader and
 company, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. The Reverend Schrader's father,
 who lives in Pittsburg, came to Hillsboro and installed the fixtures.
 The electric refrigerator, range and water heater were supplied by Mr.
 D. Kirk at a reduced price. On the main floor of the parsonage the
 window sills are of marble, a gift of the Reverend A. J. Schrader. The
 window sash and frames throughout the house are of aluminum. The table
 and chairs in the kitchen are from the Woman's Society of Christian
 Service of Wesley Chapel, coming as their gift.

THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED LABOR ON THE PARSONAGE GARAGE - 1951

1. E. S. Newman - Marvin Chapel
 2. Denver Hollandsworth - Sharon
 3. Elmer Wymer
 4. E. C. Sheets
 5. Gilbert Morrison
 6. I. B. Shrader
 7. D. D. Ruckman installed side door.
 8. Cleveland Miller
 9. Frank A. Johnson, framed roof etc.
 10. Milton Vaughan - Emmanuel
- Denny Hollandsworth furnished an electric power saw.
 A. Killingsworth furnished a brick cutter.
 Mrs. Frank A. Johnson furnished some meals for the workers.

PARSONAGE DEDICATION SERVICE HILLSBORO, WEST VIRGINIA AUG. 26, 1951

2:00 P. M. at Wesley Chapel

The Prelude - Miss R. Dice Smith

Call to worship - Choir

Hymn: "Come, Thou God of Grace."

#550. - Giardini

Invocation concluded by the Lord's Prayer: Rev. T. E. Painter

Solo: "First Psalm" - Robert Auldridge of New York City.

Responsive Reading: "Family Religion" page 563. - Rev. Clyde Hensley

Gloria Patria

Prayer: Rev. A. J. Schrader

Hymn: "Faith of Our Fathers" #256 - Henry

Offering for parsonage fund

Offertory and Presentation of Offering

Hymn: "Lead On O King Eternal" #278 - Smart

The Dedication Sermon: Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke of Pittsburg.

Prayer: Bishop Wicke

Doxology

4:00 P. M. At the Parsonage.

Sentences of Praise: Bishop Lloyd C. Wicke, "Peace Be To This House"

Hymn: "Oh Thou Whose Hand Hath Brought Us" #551 - Webb

Prayer: The Reverend Clyde Hensley, District Superintendent of the
 Lewisburg District of the Methodist Church.

Solo: "Bless This House" - Mr. Robert Auldridge.

ACT OF DEDICATION:

Trustees: "We present this building to be dedicated to the Glory
 of God and as a home for the Methodist Ministers and
 their families who are assigned to this Charge." (A. P.
 Walker and the other Trustees.) See list.

(Dedication Continued)

Bishop Wicke: "By what nameshall it be called?

People:---- "It shall be called, "The Parsonage of the Levelton Charge
of the Methodist Church

Bishop Wicke: "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
Spirit, we dedicate this home to the glory of God, committ-
ing to His loving care this house and all who dwell in it.

People: ---- "Have Thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, that
Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day.

Bishop Wicke: "We dedicate this home to the deep affections of the family
circle, and to all friendly hospitalities.

People:..... "Our Lord Jesus Christ make you abound and increase in love.
Bishop Wicke: "We dedicate this house to happiness, to hopefulness and to
health, that it may ever be to those whose home it is, a
dear haven of peace and joy.

People: "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace, good will
toward men.

Bishop Wicke: "We dedicate this parsonage home with deep gratitude for
loyal comrades who have made with us this good adventure;
and with high hope for those who shall walk this way in
days to come.

People: "Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High. Amen.

Prayer:

Benediction.

JOSEPH BEARD

For many years Mr. Joseph Beard was quite prominent in the affairs
of Wesley Chapel. His big black dog always accompanied him to Church
and lay quietly in the aisle by his master's side in what appeared to be
perfect reverence. Mr. Beard was very particular in his manner of dress.
His old black walnut clothes cupboard is now in the home of the late
Mrs. Joseph S. McNeel at Hillsboro, West Virginia. This cupboard was
the handiwork of Mr. Asbury P. Smith. The top was for clothing storage
and the bottom for boots. Mr. Beard represented his Church as a lay
man perhaps more than other in the Baltimore Conference before 1900.

RECENT CHURCH AND PARSONAGE IMPROVEMENTS.

At a Quarterly Conference held September 15, 1951, with Rev. Frank
A. Johnson acting as chairman, the building of a garage for the use of
the occupants of the parsonage was authorized and the following building
Committee named: P. H. Burns, D. S. Ruckman, Harold Elmore, E. S. Newman,
D. R. Hollandsworth, A. F. Walker, Dorsey May and M. D. Vaughan. The
pastor and E. S. Newman broke ground and dug the foundation ditches.
The plan called for a red brick-crete garage with cement floor, four-
teen by twenty-eight feet in size, with one window on the west side and
a common door on the north side, at the main entrance a metal overhead
sliding door. Brick laying constituted the only labor costs. The pastor
assisted by several interested parishoners framed it, installed the
window and metal door. The wooden door was hung by D. S. Ruckman. The
total cost of the garage was \$672.13.

Two floor-to-ceiling bookcases were built in the pastor's study
this same year by Mr. Graham LaRue and the pastor, Frank A. Johnson.

Grounds at Wesley Chapel have been improved and at the parsonage where several foundation plantings have been made. Flower beds add color and beauty to approaches. A power mower helps keep the lawn presentable. The Norway Spruce were purchased and planted by Frank A. Johnson from a nursery in Maine.

The floors were refinished in 1962 and look the best that they have ever looked. Lovely new carpet has been laid on the dais and aisles of the main auditorium. It shows the remarkable work of many loving hearts.

THE RICHARD HILL FAMILY

Richard Hill - Born July 13, 1763 - Died June 4, 1849.

Nancy McNeel Hill - Born June 21, 1769 - Died December 10, 1861.

Children

1. Thomas Hill - Born August 17, 1788 - Died February 15, 1865.
2. Elizabeth Hill - Born September 7, 1790
3. John Hill - Born July 29, 1792 - Died December 25, 1869.
4. Martha Hill - Born August 25, 1795.
5. Peggy Hill - Born August 10, 1797
6. Abraham Hill - Born December 3, 1799 - Died January 6, 1871
7. Isaac Hill - Born July 23, 1802
8. William Hill - Born December 27, 1804
9. Joel Hill - Born February 23, 1807 - Died February 18, 1884
10. George Hill - Born June 3, 1811

THE JOHN MCNEEL FAMILY

John McNeel - Born 1745 and died at the age eighty in 1825

Martha Davis McNeel - Born 1742 Or 1743 and died in 1830 at age of 88yrs.

Children

Abraham - Born in 1767 ; Married Margaret Lamb - Had one daughter.
Died 1826 " Elizabeth Bridges " three sons.
3rd Madeline Haines " two sons

Baby boy (unnamed) born while the father was at Point Pleasant and buried on Mount Tabor back of the Meeting House under a tree in a grave dug by the mother. (October, 1774)

Isaac - Born 1775. Married Rachael McKeever - Had four sons and four daughters.

Married Ann Seybert - had two sons and five daughters.

Mariam - Born in 1776 and Died 1857; Married John Jordan and had five sons and three daughters.

Nancy - Born 1769; died 1861. She had seven sons and three daughters. Her husband was the pioneer Richard Hill and lived on Hill's Creek.

Martha - Married Griffith Evans and moved west after a few years.

(The above comes partly from the old Welsh Bible brought to the Little Levels by Martha Davis McNeel, from McNeel history in the possession of Mrs. Edwin Bruffey of Beard, West Virginia and part from the inscriptions on the grave stones in the McNeel Cemetery. (See pictures in illustrations.)

THE KINNISONS

The Kinnison family is of English origin. John Kinnison is the founder, it seems, of the American line. He came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony from Bristol, England. He was a contributor to the Portsmouth Puritan Church of New Hampshire in 1666. His house was burned and he was killed by the Indians in King Phillip's War in 1677.

Some claim that David Kinnison of the fourth generation was the father of Charles and Jacob Kinnison, pioneers of Little Levels and co-founders of the White Pole Meeting House with John McNeel. This is hardly probable, but there is no doubt as to the fact of some blood relationship. David was born at Old Kingston, New Hampshire in 1736 and died in Chicago, Illinois at the age of one hundred fifteen years. His grave is in Lincoln Park, Illinois and is marked by the DAR and SAR monument honoring him as being the last survivor of the famous Boston Tea Party which occurred at Griffin's Wharf, Boston, Massachusetts, on December 16, 1773. He helped throw the tea into the harbor. He, also, served in the American Revolution and the War of 1812. A family tradition is that when David threw the tea into the harbor that he threw the "T" out of his name. David Kinnison had four wives and twenty-two children.

Charles Kinnison came to Little Levels in 1765 with his brother Jacob. Charles married Martha Day. (See Supplement: John Day). Their first child born here in 1767 was called "David". Here Charles acquired large and extensive tracts of land, from land grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia, part of which was named Kennison Mountain in his honor. This mountain is east of Hillsboro and still bears the same name. As a private in Captain Stuart's Company of Greenbrier Volunteers of Botetourt County, Virginia under the command of General Lewis, he was wounded in the Battle of Point Pleasant, October 10, 1774. Charles and Jacob were among the first members of the White Pole Meeting House Methodist of the Little Levels built on Mount Tabor. Jacob became a trustee of the Mount Tabor Methodist Church of Hillsboro, Virginia (Now W.Va) in 1799.

JOHN DAY

John Day was born June 30, 1742 in Buck County, Pennsylvania. He lived on the Greenbrier river in 1785. In this region he served as a scout (1775-1776) for about eighteen months. He was the brother of David, Sally and Martha Day. Martha married Charles Kinnison.

Here is the account he gives in one of his letters now recorded in "Kegley's Virginia Frontier" by F. B. Kegley concerning the capture of his mother and sisters, also, some experiences as a scout:

"The Shawnee Indians had come into Botetourt County in the State of Virginia and killed my brother, David Day, and had taken my mother and two sisters, Sally and Martha Day, prisoners and had also taken some other property, and made for their towns. The first night the Indians camped on the mountain Cape Caper and Cedar Creek and at that camp killed my Mother, Susan Day, formerly Susan Wylie, daughter of James Wylie. Cap. Fry raised twenty men of which I was one and we followed and when we came to the Indian camp aforesaid, there lay my Mother dead and stripped naked her head skinned, and we lifted her and laid her between two rocks and laid some rocks over her, and followed on after the Indians.

The second day we came in sight of them at their camp, and I raised

my gun, to shoot one of them and just as I was about to draw trigger I saw one of my sisters rise up right before the muzzle of my gun, between me and the Indian, and I was so alarmed at seeing my sister rise before my gun that I involuntarily hollowed, which so alarmed the Indians that they broke and run, leaving the prisoners and what they had at camp and. I went with all their might, and we got the prisoners and what property the Indians left at the camp and brought all safe to the post.

After that, I volunteered under Captain Paxton and marched to the point at the mouth of New River. ...

After I returned home, the Indians were still troublesome about Wallis Fort and Days Fort during the remainder of the British War and after it, and Cap. Cook appointed me to range as a spy in Botetourt County around the forts, to discover if there were any Indian signs in these parts, and under this appointment I acted during the remainder of the British War, and so sometime after it was over. The Indians were not at war, so as to keep the people fortified all the time. The time I acted as spy here (Little Levels) was about one year and six months but I think the time if added together, would be more than that. On the 15th of the Greenbrier in Virginia while I was spy John Bridges and James Bridges were killed by the Indians, scalped and stripped within a mile and a half of the Fort (Days) and I was near falling into the hands of the Indians while helping others to escape from them."

Four years after Cornwallis was taken John Day moved to Green County, Tennessee, where he died in 1833. *14:667,662.

THE INDIANS' ATTACK

"After the attack on Donnelly's Fort in May 1778, the Indians made no attempt to affect farther mischief in the Greenbrier County, until this year. The Fort at Point Pleasant guarded the principal pass to the settlements on the Kanawha, in the Little Levels, and on Greenbrier River, and the reception with which they had met at Colonel Donnelly's convinced them that there was not much to be gained by incursions into that section of the frontiers. But as they were now making great preparations for effectual operations against the whole border country, a party of them was dispatched to this portion of it at once for the purpose of rapine and murder, and to ascertain the state of the country and its capacity to resist invasion.

The party they sent into Greenbrier consisted of twenty-two warriors, and committed their first act of atrocity near the house of Lawrence Drinnin, a few miles above Little Levels. Henry Baker and Richard Hill, who were then staying there, going early in the morning to the river to wash, were shot at by them: Baker was killed, but Hill escaped back to the house. When the Indians fired at Baker he was near a fence between the river and Drinnin's and within gunshot of the latter place. Fearing to cross the fence for the purpose of scalping him, they prized it up, and with a pole fastening a noose around his neck, drew him down the river bank and scalped and left him there.

Apprehensive of an attack on the house, Mr. Drinnin made such preparations as were in his power to repel them and dispatched a servant to the Little Levels, with the intelligence and to procure assistance. He presently returned with twenty men, who remained there during the night, but in the morning, seeing nothing to contradict the belief that the in-

dians had departed, they buried Baker, and set out on their return to the "Levels", taking with them all who were at Drinnin's and most of his property. Arrived at the fork of the road, a question arose whether they should take the main route leading through the gap, which was deemed a favorable situation for an ambuscade, or continue on the farther but open and secure way. A majority preferred the latter, but two young men by the names of Bridger, separated from the others and traveling on the nearest path, were killed at the place where it was feared danger might be lurking.

They next went to a house occupied by Thomas Drinnin and a Mr. Smith with their families, where they made prisoners of Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Drinnin and a child; and going then towards their towns, killed on the way an old gentleman by the name of Monday and his wife. This was the last outrage committed by the Indians in the Greenbrier Settlement.*

The Bridger men were killed on what is now the E. S. Newman Farm. (According to Dr. Douglas McNeill, this likely took place in 1786.)

*36:291-293.

FORTS

FORT BURNSIDE: On the Greenbrier river likely on an island near what used to be the Burnside rail road station of the C & O Railroad below Seebert, West Virginia. "James Burnside was one of the earliest settlers along the river." He is listed as a settler in 1753 and as having land surveys on the Greenbrier by 1750-1752 and 1754. "In 1773 his place was well known and seems to have been a stopping place for explorers. In that year we find that John Alderson, Curtis Alderson, Joseph Carroll, William Morris, John Herd from Shenandoah County were there as lodgers on their way to take up lands on the New River; at this place they were joined by Archibald Taylor, Philip Cooper and Walter Kelley. Burnside seems to have been a trader." "Scouts" were often at Fort Wood on Rich Creek and patrolled the country for thirty miles or more until they met those from Fort Burnside." 37:, 38:.

FORT DAY: Called Fort Beckley or Cackley and Fort Price located on the little hill just above the Big Spring at Millpoint where the late Mr. J. Lanty McNeel's house now stands. "From the middle of April (1779) until the middle of October spies were kept scouring the country from Fort Lick on Elk River to Drinnin's Fort and Fort Beckley in the Little Levels."*14: John Day acted as Colonial Scout during the Revolutionary War and was stationed at Fort Day (likely named for him) to cover the distance from Fort Day to Fort Ellis.

FORT ELLIS: Location not known today.

FORT CLENDENEN: (Little Levels) Situated at the mouth of Stamping Creek, a cave-fort made of stone on the land owned by William Clendenen in 1780 in which services were held by the Rev. John Smith in the spring of 1788. See picture of the Clendenen home built later at the Fort entrance. This picture is in the possession of G. W. Clendenen at his

home in Hillsboro, West Virginia.

PORT AUSTIN: Wallace Austin's Fort was near the present boundary of Pocahontas County and Greenbrier County. It may have been on the site of the Droop Mountain Log Church. *1:

CAKLEY'S POST OFFICE -- POCAHONTAS COUNTY -- 1834

(This is now the Millpoint Post Office in the upper part of Little Levels.) It contains several dwellings; one mercantile store; one oil mill; one carding machine; one tan yard, etc. The country around is mostly level and fertile, producing well, Indian corn, wheat, rye, oats, potatoes, flax, etc., and is an excellent grass country. This is called the Little Levels. First rate springs abound in almost every direction and most of them sink again after running a short distance." (From Joseph Martin's, "Gazetteer of Virginia", published in 1835.)

SOME PEOPLE OF PROMINENCE WHO HAVE LIVED IN HILLSBORO

1. Mrs. Pearl Buck was born in Hillsboro, West Virginia in the house now owned by Mrs. John Townsend, a short distance along on the main U. S. Highway #219 east of the Corporation. She is the most famous West Virginia author.
2. The Reverend Doctor George Milburn Curry, whose father had great prominence in Wesley Chapel, was born in what is now the Richard McCarty home and grew to manhood in this community. He was among the first young men to be elected as a Junior Steward of Wesley Chapel. He attended Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky, West Virginia Institute of Technology and Candler School of Theology. He became District Superintendent of the Parkersburg District of the Methodist Church in the West Virginia Annual Conference and sometime later joined the Editorial Board of the Methodist Church located at Nashville, Tennessee. He is still helping to produce our great Church literature.
3. The Mr. Fenton Chapman: a resident of Hillsboro is the oldest member living of the Young Men's Christian Association. He was converted in services held by that organization. For a short time as a young man he belonged to Wesley Chapel. He is now a member of the Oak Grove Presbyterian Church.
4. Miss Roberta Dice Smith, a life-long resident of Hillsboro, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Asbury Smith and the granddaughter of the Reverend Stephen Smith, was honored as the "Teacher of the Year" for Pocahontas County for the year 1958 chosen by the Marlinton Woman's Club. The principles for her selection were: scholastic achievement, teaching

experience, humanitarian attitude toward students, outstanding work beyond the call of duty and interest in community, state and national affairs. This award came after thirty-five years of public school teaching. She taught her first year at Elkton, Virginia. Then for eleven years, during her mother's illness, she stayed at home nursing and caring for her parents until their death in 1923. The following year Miss Smith began teaching in Hillsboro. That year her sister-in-law died leaving six children, the oldest fourteen and the two youngest being seven year old twins. She brought them to her home and cared for them until all were through High School and were able to do for themselves. During this time her teaching continued at Hillsboro. She is a member of Wesley Chapel, the Woman's Society of Christian Service, a steward, teaches the Ladies' Bible Class and plays the piano for the Church Services. She loves teaching; loves and inspires her pupils. To meet her is to love her.

ANCESTORS AND DECENDENTS OF
WILLIAM HENRY KINNISON

OF
ANGUS, NEBRASKA

Oliver Wendell Holmes, one of the most famous Justices of the U. S. Supreme Court said: "While there is no disgrace in not having a definite line of ancestry to look back upon, still it is very much better to have one." In the light of this statement on American Civil Law, the following ancestral history has been edited by Mr. Don E. Kinnison of Berkeley, California, only and eldest son of the eldest son of William Henry Kinnison of Angus, and Mrs. Charles M. Skinner (Gertrude Kinnison Melvin), his daughter. This chart has been edited for the benefit of posterity and for the information of the grandchildren and great grandchildren of William Henry Kinnison.

(This information is on file at the National Clearing House of Genealogical Information, The Institute of American Genealogy, 407 South Dearborne Street, Chicago, Illinois, and is to be published in the Compendium of American Genealogy, First Families of America, Vol. VIII.) The line is as follows:

FIRST GENERATION: John Keniston, founder of the line in America, came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony from Bristol Gloucester county, England, and was on the list of those that came to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, after 1658. He was somehow decended from the Royal English Land-Ed Gentry Family of Kynaston, which had its origin at Tre-gynvarth, Shropshire County (Salop), England. He contributed to the Portsmouth Puritan Church in 1666; was taxed at Dover in 1669, 1671 and 1674. He was killed and his home burned by the Indians in King Phillip's War at Greenland, New Hampshire, on April 16, 1677. His estate was administered by his wife Agnes Magoon, and their second son was:

SECOND GENERATION: Christopher Kenniston, married at Exter, New Hampshire, on December 1, 1677, to Mary Mushamore. He served in King Phillip's War and was in Major Appleton's Company. Their fifth child was:

FIFTH GENERATION: Samuel Kinniston, who married at Straham, New Hampshire, on December 23, 1722, Ruth Rundlett. He was in the "troops for defense" at Greenland the same year. They lived at Old Kingston, New Hampshire; then, in Brentwood, and at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, they were residing at Lebanon, Maine. Their third child was:

SIXTH GENERATION: David Kinnison, who was born at Old Kingston, New Hampshire, on November 17, 1736, and who died at Chicago, Illinois, February 24, 1852, at the age of 115 years. His grave in Lincoln Park, Chicago, Illinois, is marked by a DAR and SAR Monument honoring him as being the last survivor of the famous Boston Tea Party, which occurred at Griffin's Wharf, Boston, Massachusetts on December 16, 1773. He helped throw the tea into the harbor. He also served in The American Revolution, and in the War of 1812, and was one of the founders of the Order of Redmen. A family tradition is that the name was "Kenniston" before the Boston Tea Party and that when David threw the tea into the harbor, he also threw the "t" out of his name. Hence, any people named Kinnison, Kenison, Kinnison, Kennerson, etc., all without the "t" are related to us, however, distantly; but those with the extra letter are pre-Revolutionary War relatives, if any at all. David Kinnison had four wives and twenty-two children. Among them were:

SEVENTH GENERATION: Charles and Jacob Kinnison, who were among the first settlers to cross the Allegheny mountains to settle and found what is now Hillsboro, West Virginia, Pocahontas County in 1763. Charles was born in 1750 and died in 1826 in Ohio. At Hillsboro he acquired large and extensive tracts of land, part of which was named "Kinnison" mountain in his honor. This mountain is northwest of Hillsboro, and still bears the same name. There is also a small stream that empties into the Greenbrier River that was also named in his honor, and is called "Kinnison" Run. He served in the Revolutionary War and was a private in Capt. Stewart's Company of Greenbrier County Volunteers, under the command of General Lewis, and was mustered into the service at Camp Union, Virginia. He was wounded in the Battle of Point Pleasant, Lord Dunmore's War, on the Ohio River, on October 10, 1774. This is considered to be the first major engagement of the American Revolution. He was an early Methodist; his wife was Martha Day, who was killed by the Indians in one of their savage attacks on Hillsboro, West Virginia. Their fifth child was:

EIGHTH GENERATION: Amos Kinnison. Born on January 9, 1780, and died March 10, 1860. He married Nancy Casebolt in 1802, who was born on May 24 1785 and who died March 18, 1870. Both are interred in the McNeel Cemetery, Hillsboro, West Virginia. Their second son was:

NINTH GENERATION: David Clayborn Kinnison. Born on June 24, 1812 near Hillsboro, in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. (At that time it was Greenbrier County, Virginia?) Died December 29, 1863, at Beaver, Pikes County, Ohio, having migrated there during the early statehood day of Ohio, and making it his home for the rest of his life. Family tradition is that he was captured by the Confederates during the Civil War and died of pneumonia in one of their prison camps after several weeks exposure to cold weather. He had four sons that served in the service of the Union Army. They are as follows: Charles Henry, David, Hiram D. and Jacob McNeal. His wife was Catherine Dykes, (Sometimes spelled Dyche) who was born September 1815 in Virginia and who died in Pikes County, Ohio, in 1889. (*All the above copied from Don Kinnison's letter.)

THE CLENDENNING FAMILY

I. Archibald Clendenning

II. Charles Clendenning slain by the Indians.

III. George Clendenning
Charles Clendenning

IV. William Clendenning married Sallie Cockran in 1780.

He settled on the Burgess place near Hillsboro occupied by John Payne in 1901.

V. John Clendenning married Catheryn Seybert and settled at Beard's Mill. He was baptized by the Rev. John McElhenny as a mere child. He had six sons. Catheryn at his death married Jacob Kinnison 1828.

VI. *William Clendenning, II, was apprentice of Bayless G. Rupp of Frankfort. He married Jane Cochran and settled on the Seybert Place at the Mouth of Stamping Creek. (See picture of them at their home.)

John Clendenning married Rebecca Bird and lived at Byrd's Mill in Upper Greenbrier.

James Clendenning died in youth.

Sally Clendenning cared for her parents.

*
William Clendenning is the grandfather of Mr. George Clendenning, who lives in Hillsboro in his home next to the birthplace of Mrs. Pearl Buck. (See picture of Buck birthplace.)

1. Ashler, Charles H., "A History of West Virginia". New York, 1933.
2. Armstrong, James E. "History of the Old Baltimore Conference". Baltimore, 1907.
3. Asbury, Bishop Francis, "Journal of the Rev. Francis Asbury of the M. E. Church" Vols. I, II, III. 1815.
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